



# UMANG 360°

## Monthly Current Affairs Summary Capsule

*February 2025*



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# About The Author

## BHUNESH SHARMA



- ❖ **Founder & CEO of Class24** (India's one of the most affordable Ed-tech platforms with a robust presence across various categories like School Pre Foundation, Foundation, IIT – JEE, NEET – UG, CUET, SSC, Study Abroad, UGC NET etc.).
- ❖ Class24 is working with 200+ schools in the country.
- ❖ **Co-founded Wifistudy** (Asia Pacific's giant Youtube educational Channel with 15 million subscribers)
- ❖ **Made 10,000 plus Youtube videos** related to Current affairs & Gk, helped millions of aspirants to achieve their life goals like UPSC & different exams, IIM interviews, Group discussion, KBC etc
- ❖ Bhunesh sir's current affairs videos on youtube **ranked #1 trending in 2018 by Youtube India**
- ❖ Only Teacher of the country whose videos of current affairs are **continuously trended for two years in the top 10 List of YouTube trending**
- ❖ **Founder & CEO of Smile for all** (For- purpose org. working for underprivileged kids' education in 24 states and two countries) known as Netflix for a philanthropist.

With the help of Smile for all, Bhunesh sir is **educating more than 2000 underprivileged kids** via this subscription-based model.

- ❖ Smile for all got the **Global Icon award 2022** for the best, not-for-profit organisation
- ❖ Fox Story India ranked Bhunesh sir in the **100 most influential people list of 2022**.
- ❖ This current affairs magazine has been designed to foster an **environment of critical thinking** so that the students can gauge what is going on around them and become more aware of the world we live in. In addition to this magazine, the students must inculcate a **habit of researching the topics** they come across in their daily life, which will not only enrich their minds but also give them new topics over which they can connect with like-minded people.

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# International

## Chapter 1



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## Topic in Focus

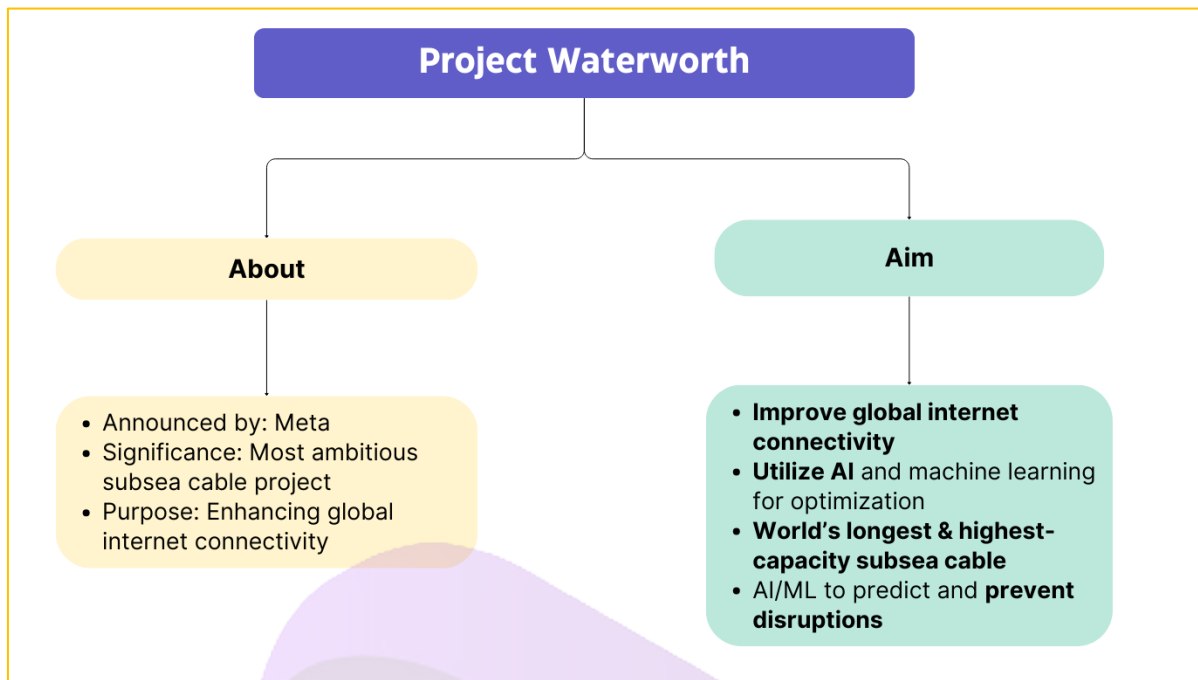
- **Hague Service Convention:** The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has sought assistance from India's Ministry of Law and Justice under the Hague Service Convention to serve summons on billionaire Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar Adani in a securities and wire fraud case.
- **Project Waterworth:** Meta has announced Project Waterworth which is its most ambitious subsea cable project.
- **TRUST Initiative:** The India-US TRUST Initiative is a recent agreement between India and the United States to work together to secure the supply of critical minerals like lithium and rare earth elements (REEs), essential for advanced technologies, energy, and pharmaceutical production.
- **PM Modi to visit France:** PM Modi co-chaired the AI Action Summit with French President Macron, focusing on open-source AI development, sustainability, and creating job opportunities through skilling.
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):** Recently, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to the UAE and upcoming engagements with Greece and Egypt signal India's renewed push for advancing the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which was stalled due to the Israel-Gaza conflict.
- **Panama Canal:** The U.S. claimed its government ships could now pass through the Panama Canal for free. The Panama Canal is a strategic artificial waterway connecting the Atlantic Ocean (via the Caribbean Sea) and the Pacific Ocean.

## Hague Service Convention

- **Context:** The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has sought assistance from India's Ministry of Law and Justice under the Hague Service Convention to serve summons on billionaire Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar Adani in a securities and wire fraud case.
- **About Hague Service Convention**
  - It is formally known as the Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters (1965).
  - It is a multilateral treaty designed to facilitate the efficient and reliable transmission of legal documents in civil and commercial matters across international borders.
  - It ensures that individuals or entities involved in legal proceedings receive proper notice while also providing proof of service in cross-border cases.
  - It is applicable when both the requesting and receiving countries are signatories.
  - The Convention has been adopted by 84 countries, including the United States, India, the United Kingdom, Canada, and most of Europe.
  - Each member state must designate a central authority responsible for receiving, processing, and facilitating service requests from other signatory nations.
- **Key Objectives of the Hague Service Convention**
  - To establish a standardized process for serving legal documents in foreign jurisdictions.
  - To ensure that defendants receive timely and actual notice of judicial proceedings.
  - To prevent delays and procedural challenges in international litigation.
  - To streamline communication between the judicial systems of different countries

## Project Waterworth

- **Context:** Meta has announced Project Waterworth which is its most ambitious subsea cable project.



- **About Project Waterworth**

- Aim: The project aims to enhance global internet connectivity using AI and machine learning.
- Focus: It will focus on better cable deployment and maintenance for a more reliable internet.
- It will be the world's longest and highest-capacity subsea cable. AI and machine learning will help predict and prevent disruptions.
- The cable will cover 50,000 km across five continents.

- **Benefits of Project Waterworth**

- It will improve global digital infrastructure for faster and more reliable internet.
- It will strengthen international digital communication across continents.
- It helps to support AI innovation and high-speed digital services.
- It will boost economic growth and digital inclusion in connected regions.

### TRUST Initiative

- **Context:** The India-US TRUST Initiative is a recent agreement between India and the United States to work together to secure the supply of critical minerals like lithium and rare earth elements (REEs), essential for advanced technologies, energy, and pharmaceutical production.

- **About TRUST Initiative**

- TRUST stands for: Transforming Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology.
- It is a partnership between India and the US to:
- Improve the supply of critical minerals like lithium and rare earth elements (REEs).
- Strengthen supply chains for pharmaceuticals, advanced materials, and high-tech products.
- Reduce dependence on China, which currently dominates the global supply of critical minerals.

- **Key Objectives of TRUST**

- Strengthen supply chains for: Critical minerals (lithium, rare earth, cobalt, etc.), Pharmaceuticals (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients – APIs) and advanced materials used in technology and defence.

- Encourage technology sharing: It reduce export controls between India and the U.S.A and speed up the transfer of advanced technology between the two countries.
- Boost manufacturing and innovation in Semiconductors, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Quantum computing, Defence technology, Space exploration and clean energy solutions.

## Benefits for India and U.S.A

### (i) Stronger Pharma Supply Chain:

- TRUST will help India secure the minerals needed for drug production and reduce dependence on China.
- Helps India maintain its position as a major exporter of medicines to the US.

### (ii) Securing Critical Minerals:

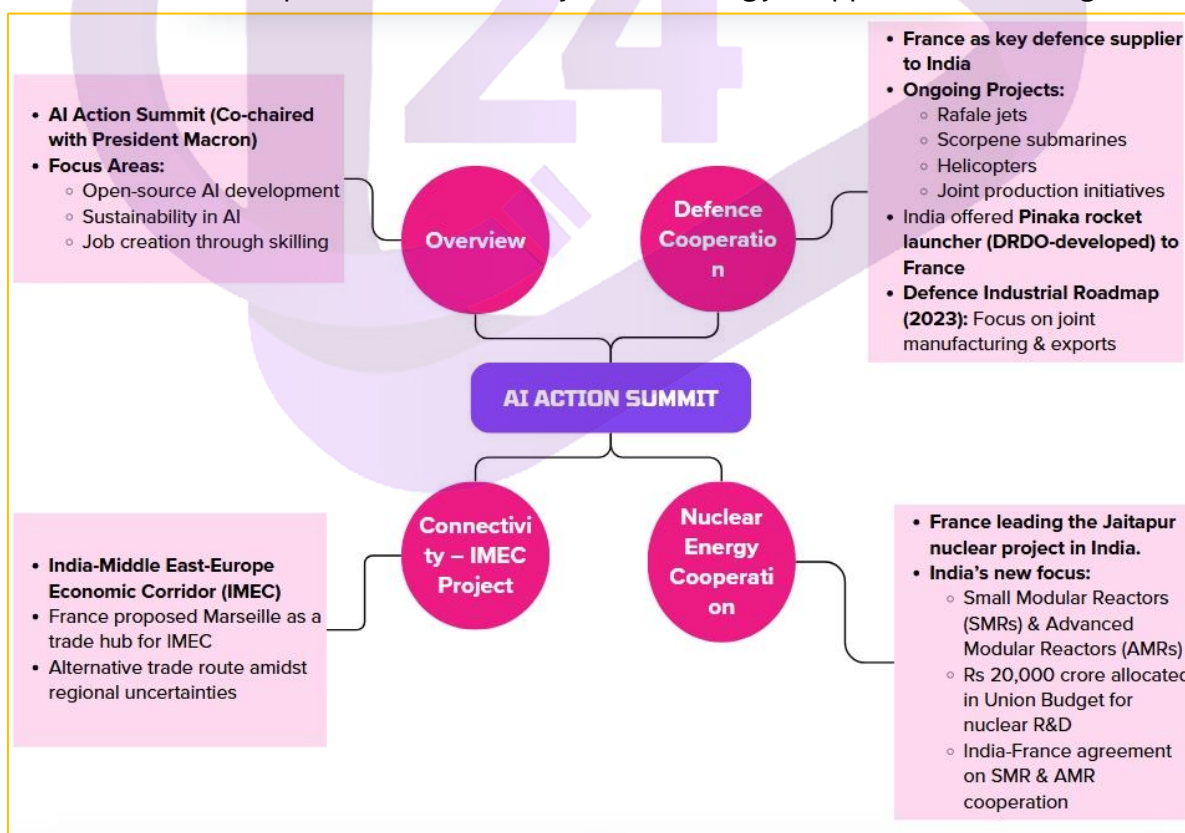
- Lithium and rare earth minerals are needed for electric vehicles, batteries, and defence equipment.
- India and the US will work on exploring and processing these minerals together.
- Less reliance on China, making supply chains safer.

### (iii) Encouraging Innovation:

- TRUST will bring together experts from universities, companies, and governments.
- Focus on new technologies in defence, space, AI, and renewable energy.
- Semiconductors and batteries are key areas for cooperation.

## PM Modi's Visit to France

- **Context:** PM Modi co-chaired the AI Action Summit with French President Macron, focusing on open-source AI development, sustainability, and creating job opportunities through skilling.



### Key Takeaways from PM Modi's Visit to France

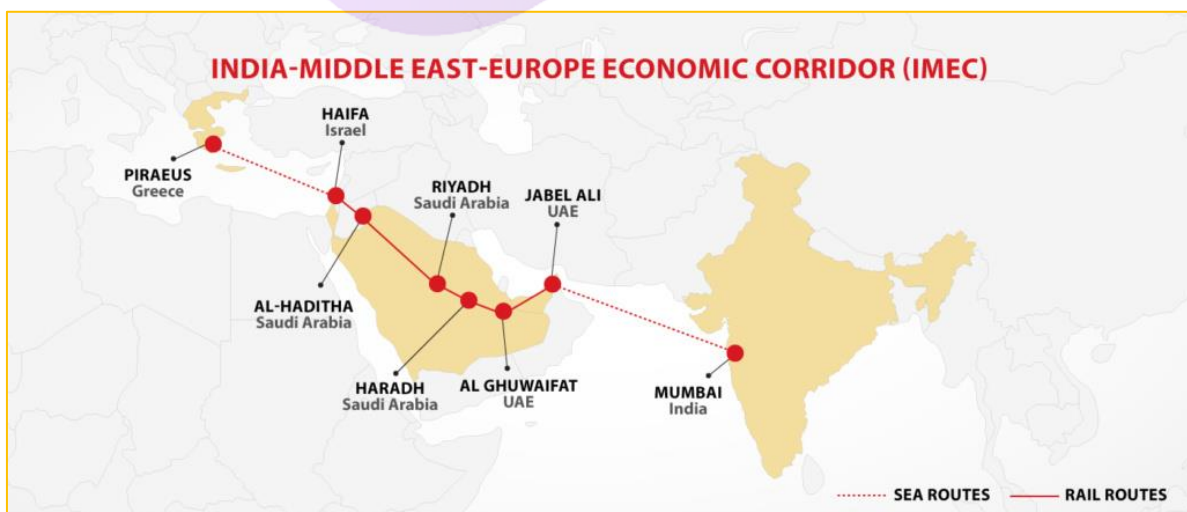
#### ➤ Strengthening Strategic Partnership:

- India and France reviewed the 'Horizon 2047' Roadmap, agreed in 2023, marking 25 years of their strategic partnership (since 1998).

- They reaffirmed cooperation in defence, nuclear energy, connectivity, and climate change.
- **Geopolitical Shifts – US and Trump Factor:**
  - Trump’s outreach to Russia raised concerns in Europe over strategic dependence on the US.
  - France and the EU are reconsidering their defence policies, aligning with India’s vision of strategic autonomy and a multipolar world.
- **Defence Cooperation:**
  - France is a key defence supplier to India; ongoing projects include Rafale jets, Scorpene submarines, helicopters, and joint production.
  - India offered its DRDO-developed Pinaka rocket launcher to France.
  - Defence Industrial Roadmap (2023) aims to strengthen joint manufacturing and exports.
- **Connectivity – IMEC Project:**
  - India and France discussed the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), connecting India, the Gulf, and Europe.
  - France proposed Marseille as a key hub, offering an alternative trade route amidst regional uncertainties.
- **Nuclear Energy Cooperation:**
  - France, a leader in nuclear power, is engaged in the Jaitapur nuclear project in India, though legal and cost issues remain.
  - India plans legal reforms and is shifting focus to Small and Advanced Modular Reactors (SMRs, AMRs); Rs 20,000 crore was allocated in the Union Budget for nuclear R&D.
  - India and France signed a cooperation agreement on SMRs and AMRs.
- **Climate Commitment:**
  - Both nations reinforced their commitment to climate action and energy transition, especially as Trump weakened US climate policies.

### India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

- News: Recently, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar’s visit to the UAE and upcoming engagements with Greece and Egypt signal India’s renewed push for advancing the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which was stalled due to the Israel-Gaza conflict.



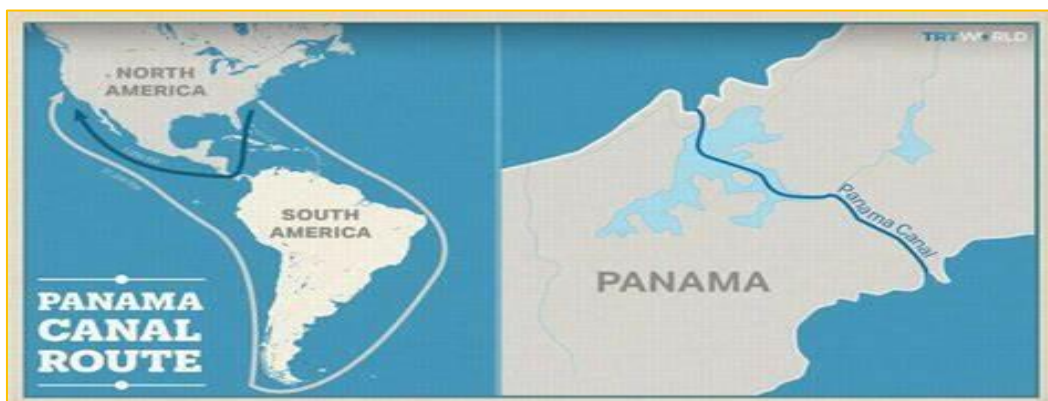
- **About IMEC**



- It is a connectivity project aiming to enhance trade between India, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean region, and Europe.
- It focuses on infrastructure: ports, railways, roads, sea lines, and pipelines. It builds on existing trade routes and fills gaps in connectivity.
- Key Participants: Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed during the G20 summit (September 2023, New Delhi) by:
  - India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, Italy, the US, and the EU.
- **Economic Importance**
  - Boosting India-Gulf Trade: It is build on existing trade relations between India and Arab Gulf countries. Also, it enhances India's economic presence in the region.
  - Connection to Europe: It creates shorter trade routes bypassing Bab al-Mandab and the Suez Canal. It links Gulf countries, Eastern Mediterranean, and Western Europe
  - Energy and Trade Opportunities: It give access to Eastern Mediterranean gas fields. It also connects two major trading blocs: EU and GCC.
  - Post-Oil Economy: It also aligns with Gulf countries' plans for diversification and a knowledge-based economy.
- **Strategic and Geopolitical Importance**
  - Alternative Routes: It complements existing projects like Chabahar Port and the International North-South Transportation Corridor (INSTC). Also, it offers additional trade options connecting southern Eurasia.
  - Counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): It provides a rival project to balance China's influence in the region.
  - India's Global Aspirations: It enhances India's connectivity with neighbors and global powers. It also supports India's growth as a G20 economy and emerging global power.
- **Challenges**
  - Economic Viability: Gulf countries are not manufacturing hubs, leading to higher freight costs. It excludes key regional economies like Türkiye, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq.
  - Existing Routes: Red Sea and Suez Canal already connect South Asia to Europe effectively.
  - Geographic Barriers: Parts of the Arabian Peninsula are barren deserts, posing infrastructure challenges.
  - Regional Conflicts: There has been regional instability due to: Israel-Hamas war, Red Sea disruptions by Yemen's Houthi rebels and Iran-Israel tensions.

### Panama Canal

- **Context:** The U.S. claimed its government ships could now pass through the Panama Canal for free.



- **About Panama Canal**

- The Panama Canal is a strategic artificial waterway connecting the Atlantic Ocean (via the Caribbean Sea) and the Pacific Ocean.
- It is located in Central America, within Panama. It is one of the most important global maritime trade routes.
- It significantly reduces travel time for ships, avoiding the long and dangerous route around Cape Horn (South America).
- The canal was controlled by the U.S. until 1999 when it was transferred to Panama under the Torrijos-Carter Treaties (1977).

- **Geopolitical Importance**

- Key chokepoint in global trade, handling about 5% of world maritime trade.
- Shortens travel time between the Pacific and Atlantic, especially for US, China, and Europe.
- A crucial factor in US foreign policy, maintaining influence in Latin America.
- Competition with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Nicaragua Canal proposal.

- **Strategic Issues for India**

- Key route for India's trade with Latin America and the US West Coast.
- Increased toll fees and delays affect India's export-import competitiveness.
- Alternative trade routes, such as the Arctic Northern Sea Route (NSR), are gaining importance.
- China's influence in Panama poses strategic challenges for India's global trade positioning.

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# Environment

## Chapter 2

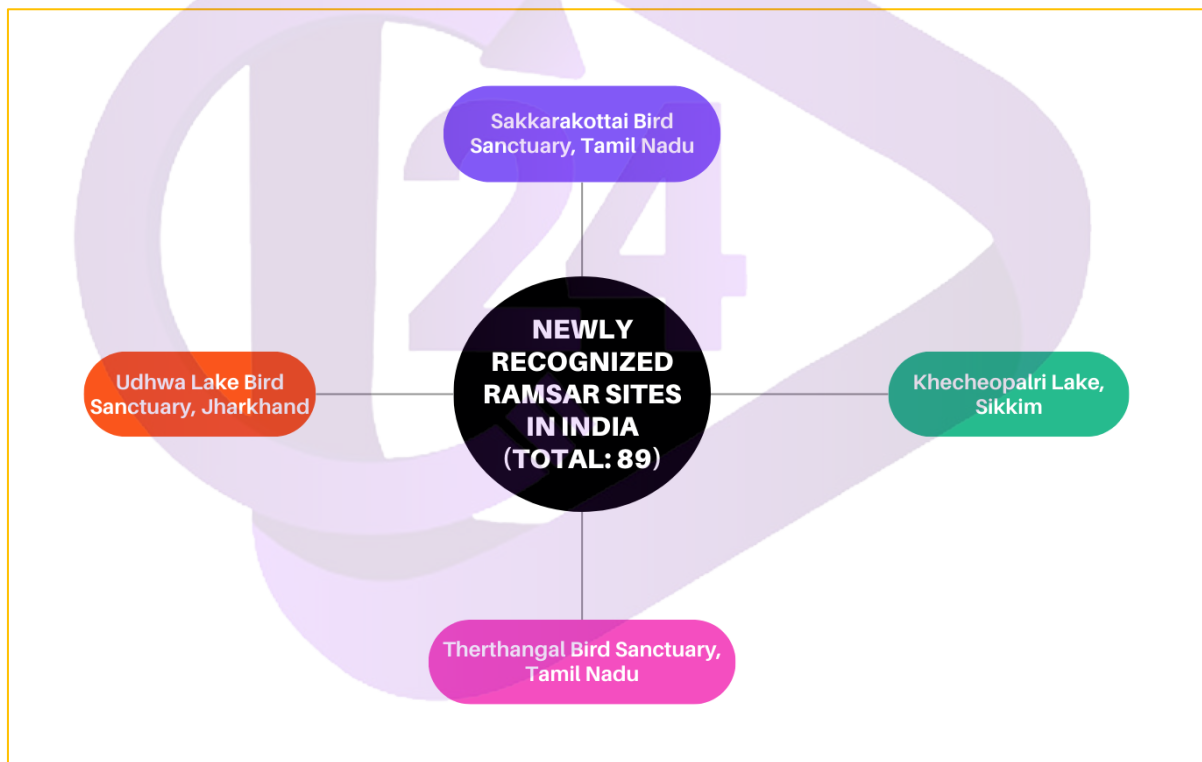


## Topic in Focus

- **Four new Ramsar Sites added** – Four wetlands were recognized as Ramsar sites, increasing India's total to 89.
- **Makhana Board** – The Union Budget 2025 announced the establishment of a Makhana Board in Bihar to develop the Makhana industry.
- **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** – IBCA became a treaty-based intergovernmental organization on January 23, 2025, to conserve seven big cat species.
- **Gulf of Eilat** – A study highlights the resilience of Gulf of Eilat coral reefs, which recovered from a 3,000-year growth hiatus.
- **Parambikulam Tiger Reserve** – A faunal survey in Kerala's Parambikulam Tiger Reserve recorded 15 new species.
- **Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2025** – India ranked 6th among the nations worst affected by climate disasters, with 80,000 fatalities and \$180 billion in economic losses (1993-2023).

### India adds 4 new Ramsar sites, increasing the total to 89.

- **Context:** Recently, four more wetlands have been recognized as Ramsar sites, increasing the total number in the country to 89.



- **About Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu**
  - Location: The Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary is situated in the Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.
  - Area: The sanctuary covers an area of 230.495 hectares.
  - Ecological Importance:
    - It functions as an irrigation tank, which stores water for agricultural purposes in the region.
    - The wetland is recharged by the northeast monsoon, particularly between October and January.

- The sanctuary provides a breeding and foraging ground for 42 bird species, including the Spot-billed Pelican, Grey Heron, Little Cormorant, and Black Kite.
- It is strategically located along the Central Asian Flyway, making it an essential stopover site for migratory birds.
- Environmental Benefits:
  - The sanctuary plays a crucial role in climate regulation by stabilizing the local microclimate.
  - It helps in groundwater recharge, ensuring water availability for nearby communities.
  - It supports irrigation and agriculture, benefiting local farmers and enhancing food security.

- **About Therthangal Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu**

- Location: The Therthangal Bird Sanctuary is also located in the Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.
- Area: It spans 29.295 hectares.
- Ecological Importance:
  - The sanctuary is a freshwater ecosystem, which provides an important breeding ground for waterbirds.
  - It supports a diverse avian population, with 96 recorded bird species across 18 orders and 44 families.
  - Some of the notable bird species found here include the Oriental Darter, Black-headed Ibis, Asian Woolly-necked Stork, and Spot-billed Pelican.
  - Environmental Benefits:
    - The wetland contributes significantly to climate regulation by maintaining local temperature and humidity levels.
    - It plays a vital role in groundwater recharge, ensuring water sustainability for the surrounding regions.
    - The sanctuary also supports irrigation and agriculture, benefiting local livelihoods.

- **About Khecheopalri Lake, Sikkim**

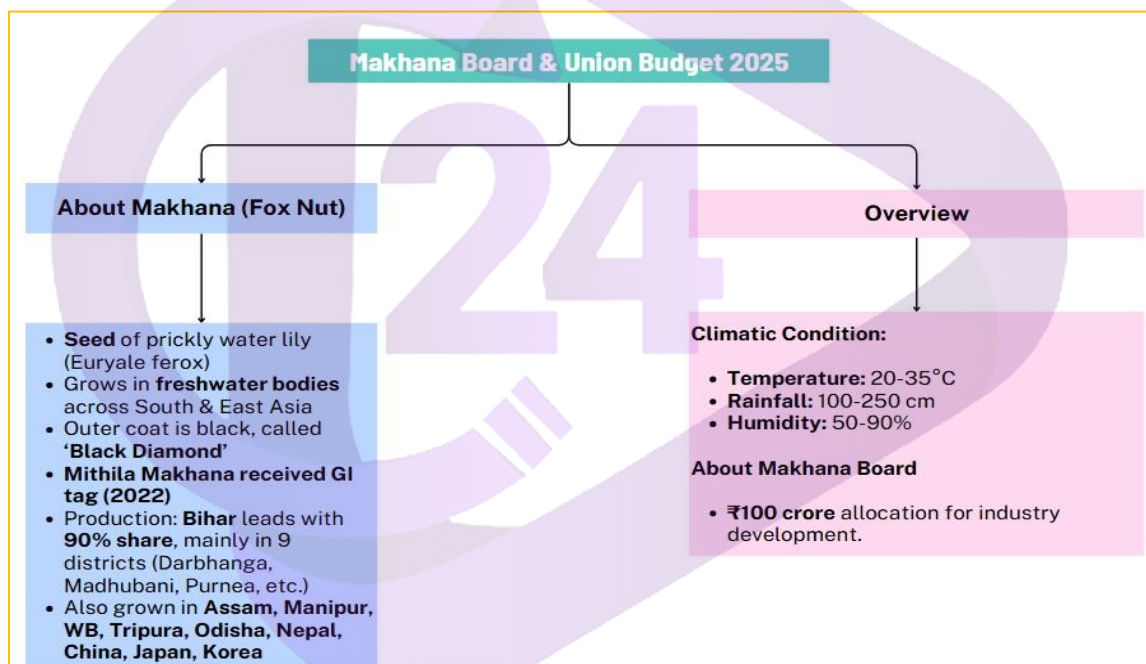
- Location: Khecheopalri Lake is located near Khecheopalri village in West Sikkim.
- Cultural and Ecological Significance:
  - The lake is considered sacred by both Buddhists and Hindus and is popularly known as the wish-fulfilling lake.
  - It is believed to be blessed by Guru Padmasambhava and the Goddess Tara, making it an important spiritual site.
  - The lake is part of a Himalayan peatland ecosystem and is surrounded by broad-leaved mixed temperate forests.
- **Biodiversity:**
  - The wetland supports a rich variety of macrophytes, phytoplankton, and zooplankton.
  - It is home to several fish species, including *Cyprinus carpio* (Common Carp) and *Danio aequipinnatus* (Giant Danio).
  - It serves as a resting site for migratory birds from the Trans-Himalayan region, making it an ecologically significant habitat.

- **About Udhwa Lake Bird Sanctuary, Jharkhand**

- Location: The Udhwa Lake Bird Sanctuary is located in the Sahibganj district of Jharkhand.
- The sanctuary consists of two interconnected water bodies, namely Pataura Lake (155 hectares) and Berhale Lake (410 hectares). These lakes are linked by a water channel, forming a continuous wetland ecosystem.
- Ecological Importance:
  - The sanctuary is situated on the floodplain of the Ganga River, making it an essential part of the region's water cycle.
  - It is recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) due to its significance for avian conservation.
  - The sanctuary is home to 83 bird species, including the Near Threatened Black-necked Stork.
  - Additionally, it supports 22 commercially valuable fish species, contributing to local fisheries and the regional economy.

## Makhana Board

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2025 announced the establishment of a Makhana Board in Bihar, bringing renewed attention to Makhana.



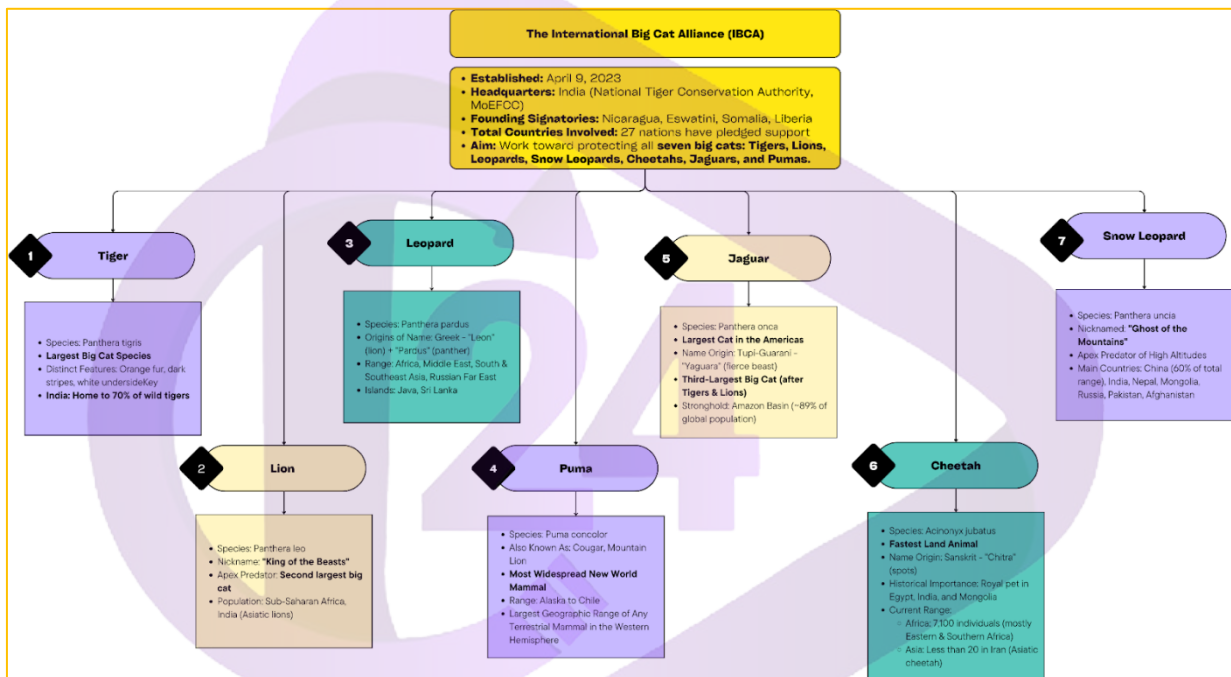
- **About Makhana**
  - Makhana (Fox Nut) is the dried seed of the prickly water lily plant (*Euryale ferox*).
  - It grows in freshwater ponds, lakes, and wetlands across South and East Asia.
  - The outer seed coat is black, which is why it is often called 'Black Diamond.'
  - Mithila Makhana received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2022.
  - Production: Bihar produces 90% of India's makhana, mainly in nine districts: Darbhanga, Madhubani, Purnea, Katihar, Saharsa, Supaul, Araria, Kishanganj, and Sitamarhi.
  - Makhana is also grown in Assam, Manipur, West Bengal, Tripura, Odisha, as well as in Nepal, Bangladesh, China, Japan, and Korea.
- **Climatic condition for Makhana Cultivation:**
  - Temperature: 20-35°C
  - Rainfall: 100-250 cm and
  - Humidity: 50-90%

- **About Makhana Board**

- The board has been allocated ₹100 crore to develop the Makhana industry.
- The key objectives of the Makhana Board are:
- Train farmers in export-oriented production and support Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).
- Attract investments in food processing units
- Develop export infrastructure (cargo facilities at Bihar’s airports)
- Ensure farmers get access to government schemes
- Increasing production and processing
- Improve farming techniques to increase production.

**International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**

- **Context:** The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has formally become a full-fledged treaty-based intergovernmental organization as of January 23, 2025.



- **About International Big Cat Alliance**

- The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization dedicated to the conservation of seven big cat species – tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, pumas, jaguars, and cheetahs.
- It was launched in April 2023 during the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger in India.
- IBCA is headquartered in India, which serves as the depository for instruments of ratification.
- On January 23, 2025, IBCA officially became an intergovernmental treaty-based organization following the ratification of its framework agreement.
- There are four founding members: India, Nicaragua, Eswatini, and Somalia. Liberia recently ratified on January 8, 2025.
- As of now, 27 countries have agreed to join IBCA.

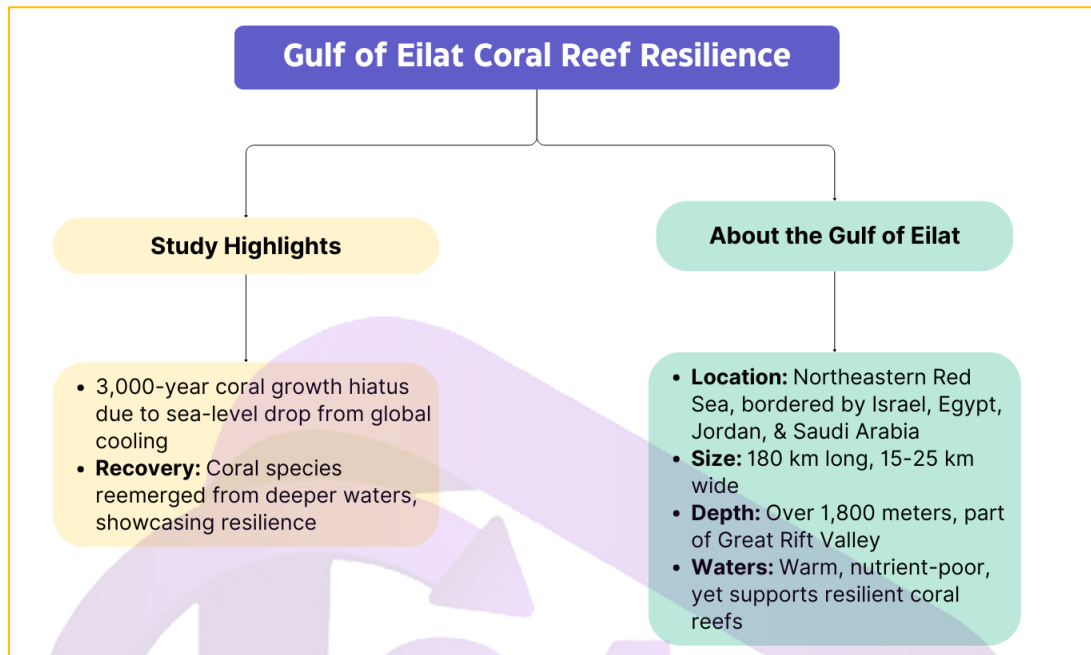
- **IBCA aims to:**

- Protect and conserve the seven big cat species.
- Support research, training, and funding for conservation programs.
- Collaborate with global and national organizations for wildlife protection.

- Combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

## Gulf of Eilat

- **Context:** A recent study highlights the resilience of Gulf of Eilat coral reefs, which faced a 3,000-year growth hiatus due to a likely sea-level drop from global cooling. Despite this, they recovered as coral species reemerged from deeper waters.

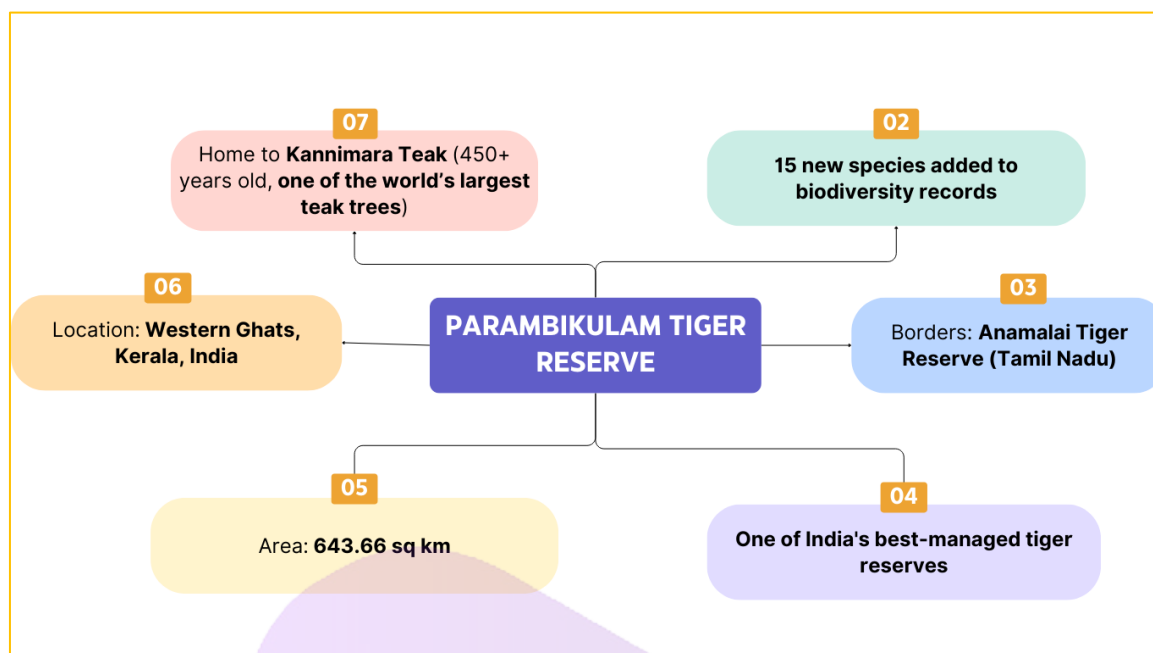


- **About the Gulf of Eilat**
  - The Gulf of Eilat (also known as the Gulf of Aqaba) is a northeastern extension of the Red Sea, bordered by Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.
  - It is known for its rich marine biodiversity, stunning coral reefs, and clear waters, making it a key site for marine research, tourism, and conservation efforts.
  - The Gulf of Eilat stretches approximately 180 km (112 miles) long and 15-25 km (9-16 miles) wide.
  - It is characterized by steep, deep waters, reaching depths of over 1,800 meters (5,900 feet). The region is part of the Great Rift Valley.
  - The warm, nutrient-poor waters of the Gulf support some of the world's most resilient coral reefs.
  - Unlike other reefs that are highly sensitive to rising ocean temperatures, corals in the Gulf of Eilat have shown exceptional resistance to bleaching, possibly due to genetic adaptation from migration through the Red Sea.
  - Biodiversity: The coral reefs in the Gulf of Eilat are home to over 250 species of corals and 1,200 species of fish, making it a biodiversity hotspot.
  - These reefs provide habitat for species such as: Lionfish, Clownfish, Giant moray eels, Dolphins and sea turtles
  - Environmental Threats and Conservation: Coastal development, Pollution and overfishing, Climate change and ocean acidification.

## Parambikulam Tiger Reserve

- **Context:** A recent faunal survey conducted by the Forest Department in Kerala's Parambikulam Tiger Reserve has added 15 new species to its biodiversity records.





### • About Parambikulam Tiger Reserve

- Parambikulam Tiger Reserve is a protected area located in the Western Ghats of Kerala, India.
- It spread across approximately 643.66 sq km.
- It is one of the best-managed tiger reserves in India and serves as a critical habitat for several endangered species.
- Parambikulam shares its borders with the Anamalai Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu.
- The terrain consists of undulating hills, valleys, rivers, and reservoirs, providing a diverse ecosystem for flora and fauna.
- Flora: The reserve boasts diverse vegetation, including teak, rosewood, sandalwood, and bamboo forests. It is home to one of the world's oldest and largest teak trees, Kannimara Teak, which is over 450 years old.
- Fauna: Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, Asiatic elephant, sloth bear, gaur (Indian bison), sambar deer, Nilgiri tahr, and lion-tailed macaque.
- Birds: Over 250 species of birds, including Malabar pied hornbill, great Indian hornbill, and grey-headed fish eagle.
- Reptiles: King cobra, Indian rock python, and various species of turtles and lizards.

### Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2025

- **Context:** The Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2025 report highlighted that India registered at least 80,000 fatalities and nearly \$180 billion in economic losses (inflation-adjusted) due to climate change-induced extreme weather events between 1993 and 2023.
- **About Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2025**
  - The Climate Risk Index (CRI) is an annual report published by the environmental organization Germanwatch.
  - It evaluates the impact of extreme weather events globally and ranks countries based on their vulnerability to climate-related disasters.
  - Aim: The CRI aims to highlight countries that are most affected by extreme weather and emphasize the need for stronger climate policies and disaster preparedness.

### Key Findings from CRI 2025 Report on India

1. **Fatalities and Economic Impact:** At least 80,000 people died due to extreme weather events. India suffered \$180 billion in losses (inflation-adjusted)
2. **India's Global Standing:** India ranked 6th globally among nations worst hit by climate disasters. India accounted for 10% of global fatalities from extreme weather events. India contributed 4.2% of global economic losses.
3. **Frequency of Extreme Weather Events:** India faced more than 400 extreme weather events from 1993 to 2023. These events impacted 4.6 crore (46 million) people.
4. **Major Types of Extreme Weather in India:**
  - **Heat Waves:** Extremely high temperatures, often touching 50°C, especially in 1998, 2002, 2003, and 2015.
  - **Floods and Landslides:** Recurring floods and landslides led to mass displacement and damage to agriculture.
  - **Cyclones:** Coastal regions were severely affected by destructive cyclones such as 1998 Gujarat Cyclone, 1999 Odisha Super Cyclone, Cyclone Hudhud (2014) and Cyclone Amphan (2020)
5. **Climate Change as a Key Driver:** Climate change made extreme heat 30 times more likely in India. Global warming is intensifying these events, making floods, heatwaves, and cyclones more frequent and severe.
6. **Social and Economic Consequences:** Floods and droughts force rural populations to migrate to cities. Farmers suffer crop damage, leading to financial stress and food shortages.

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# Polity

## Chapter 3



## Topics in Focus

- **Furlough and Parole:** Recently, the convicts of the Hashimpura massacre have moved the Delhi High Court against a prison rule related to furloughs.
- **Ad-hoc judges:** Ad-hoc judges are retired High Court judges who are temporarily reappointed to help clear pending cases. They have the same powers as sitting judges but serve only for a limited time. Article 224-A of the Constitution (added in 1963) allows the appointment of retired judges on an ad-hoc basis.
- **Article 200:** The Supreme Court is currently hearing a case involving the Tamil Nadu government and Governor RN Ravi over delays in granting assent to Bills. The ruling in this case will set a precedent for other states facing similar issues.
- **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024:** India ranked 96 out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024, dropping three places from 93 in 2023.
- **Rarest of Rare Doctrine:** Recently, two separate murder cases resulted in contrasting verdicts, shedding light on how Indian courts interpret and apply the 'rarest of rare' doctrine while awarding the death penalty.
- **Article 101(4) of Indian Constitution:** Amritpal Singh, incarcerated under the National Security Act, has moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court to attend the ongoing Parliament session. He seeks to avoid disqualification under Article 101(4) due to prolonged absence from the Lok Sabha.
- **Zonal Council:** Recently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah presided over the 27th meeting of the Western Zonal Council in Pune.
- **Three-language policy:** The controversy over the three-language policy has resurfaced due to the ongoing conflict between the Tamil Nadu government and the Union government regarding its implementation under the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

## Furlough and Parole

- **Context:** Recently, the convicts of the Hashimpura massacre have moved the Delhi High Court against a prison rule related to furloughs.
- **About Parole**
  - Parole is a conditional release of a prisoner who has served part of their sentence, allowing the person to live outside prison under specified conditions. The term originates from the French phrase "je donne ma parole" (I give my word), symbolizing trust in the prisoner's adherence to conditions.
- **Types of Parole**
  - Regular Parole: Granted for general reasons like family matters (usually up to one month).

- Emergency/Custody Parole: Given for critical situations (death, medical emergencies) under strict supervision.
- Conditions for Parole
- Mandatory reporting to authorities.
- No criminal activity, alcohol, or drug use.
- Compliance with court-imposed restrictions.

- **About Furlough**

- Furlough is a temporary leave granted to prisoners under legal provisions, not dependent on behaviour.

- **Purpose of Furlough**

- Maintains family and social connections.
- Provides psychological relief from prison monotony.
- Rewards good behaviour.
- Aids reintegration into society.

- **Duration & Eligibility**

- Typically lasts up to 14 days.
- The period spent on furlough counts toward the sentence.
- Prisoners convicted of serious crimes (rape, dacoity, terrorism) may be ineligible.

**Key Differences:**

Features	Furlough	Parole
<b>Sentence Status</b>	Continues to run	Suspended during release
<b>Granting Authority</b>	Deputy Inspector General of Prisons	Divisional Commissioner
<b>Frequency</b>	Limited	Can be granted multiple times
<b>Reason Needed?</b>	No	Yes

**Ad-hoc Judges in High Court**

- **About Ad-hoc Judge**



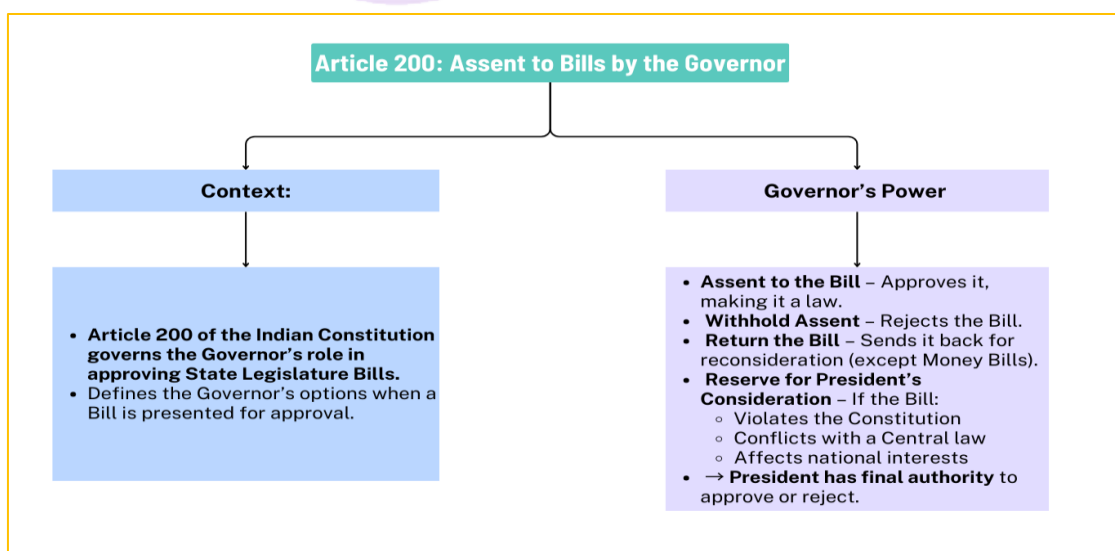
- Ad-hoc judges are retired High Court judges who are temporarily reappointed to help clear pending cases.
- They have the same powers as sitting judges but serve only for a limited time.
- Article 224-A of the Constitution (added in 1963) allows the appointment of retired judges on an ad-hoc basis.
- Ad-hoc judges can hear only criminal appeals.
- He/ She must be part of a Bench led by a sitting judge.
- Cannot exceed 10% of the High Court's sanctioned strength (each High Court can appoint 2 to 5 ad-hoc judges).
- Term: 2 to 3 years.
- Same salary and allowances as permanent High Court judges, but no pension.
- Accommodation or housing allowance similar to regular judges.

- **Appointment Process**

- The Chief Justice of a High Court proposes a retired judge's name.
- The State's Chief Minister forwards it to the Governor.
- The Governor sends it to the Union Minister of Law & Justice.
- The Law Minister consults the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- The Prime Minister advises the President.
- The President approves the appointment.
- A formal notification is issued, completing the process.

## Article 200

- **Context:** The Supreme Court is currently hearing a case involving the Tamil Nadu government and Governor RN Ravi over delays in granting assent to Bills. The ruling in this case will set a precedent for other states facing similar issues.
- **About Article 200**



- Article 200 of the Indian Constitution deals with the Assent to Bills by the Governor. It outlines the options available to the Governor of a state when a Bill passed by the State Legislature is presented for approval.
- When a Bill is passed by the State Legislature and sent to the Governor, the Governor has the following options:
  - Assent to the Bill – The Governor may give approval, making the Bill a law.
  - Withhold Assent – The Governor may refuse to sign the Bill.
  - Return the Bill – The Governor may return the Bill (if it is not a Money Bill) to the State Legislature with a request for reconsideration.
  - Reserve the Bill for the Consideration of the President – If the Governor believes that the Bill is against the provisions of the Constitution, is in conflict with a Central law, or affects national interests, s/he may refer it to the President. If the Bill is reserved for the President's consideration, the President has the final authority to approve or reject it.
- **Significance of Article 200:**
  - It ensures a system of checks and balances between the State Legislature and the Governor.
  - It allows the Governor and the President to safeguard Constitutional principles.
  - The provision to return or reserve a Bill helps prevent hasty or unconstitutional legislation.

### **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024**

- Context: India ranked 96 out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024, dropping three places from 93 in 2023.
- **About Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024**
  - The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is released annually by Transparency International.
  - It ranks 180 countries and territories based on perceived levels of public sector corruption.
  - The score is on a scale of 0 to 100:
    - 0 = Highly Corrupt
    - 100 = Very Clean
  - The ranking is based on surveys and assessments by experts and business leaders.
- **India ranked 96 out of 180 countries in CPI 2024.**
  - India's score dropped to 38 (from 39 in 2023 and 40 in 2022), showing a gradual decline.
  - India's rank in 2023 was 93, meaning it fell by three positions in 2024.
- **Least Corrupt Nations (Top 3):**
  - Denmark (1st) – Cleanest country.
  - Finland (2nd).
  - Singapore (3rd).
- **India's Neighbouring Countries' Rankings**

- China – Rank 76.
- Pakistan – Rank 135.
- Sri Lanka – Rank 121
- Bangladesh – Rank 149

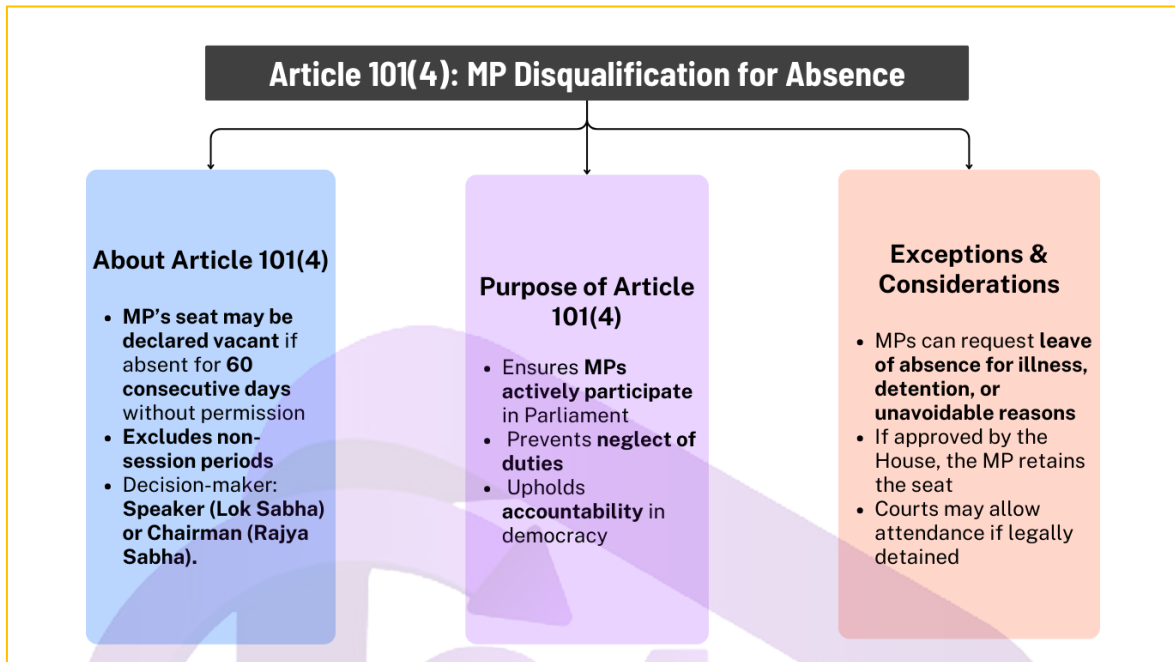
### Rarest of Rare Doctrine

- **Context:** Recently, two separate murder cases resulted in contrasting verdicts, shedding light on how Indian courts interpret and apply the ‘rarest of rare’ doctrine while awarding the death penalty.
- **About Rarest of Rare Doctrine**
  1. The Doctrine of Rarest of Rare is a principle adopted in India to guide courts in deciding between the death penalty and life imprisonment.
  2. It was first discussed in Jagmohan Singh vs. State of U.P. (1972), where the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the death penalty.
  3. The court ruled that capital punishment is constitutional under Article 21 (right to life) and does not violate Article 14 (equality before the law) or Article 19 (fundamental rights).
  4. The Supreme Court formally established the ‘rarest of rare’ doctrine in Bachan Singh vs. State of Punjab (1980) in which it held that the death penalty should only be imposed in exceptional cases. However, it did not clearly define what qualifies as ‘rarest of rare’.
  5. The Supreme Court laid down a five-factor framework for determining when a case qualifies as ‘rarest of rare’:
    - a) Manner of murder – If committed in an extremely brutal, grotesque, or revolting way that shocks society.
    - b) Motive of murder – When the crime is committed with extreme depravity, such as for political gains or sadistic pleasure.
    - c) Socially abhorrent nature– When the crime targets vulnerable individuals or communities, causing widespread outrage.
    - d) Magnitude of the crime – When multiple murders are committed, showing extreme criminality.
    - e) Personality of the offender and victim– If the victim is a child, elderly, woman, or otherwise helpless.
  6. The Supreme Court struck down Section 303 of the IPC, which prescribed a mandatory death penalty for life convicts who commit murder. It ruled that all murders should be judged under Section 302, which allows discretion between the death penalty and life imprisonment.
  7. Current Status: The death penalty remains constitutionally valid but is only applied in exceptional cases. Courts must carefully examine aggravating and mitigating factors before awarding capital punishment.



## Article 101(4) of the Indian Constitution

- **Context:** Amritpal Singh, incarcerated under the National Security Act, has moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court to attend the ongoing Parliament session. He seeks to avoid disqualification under Article 101(4) due to prolonged absence from the Lok Sabha.



### • **About Article 101(4) of the Indian Constitution**

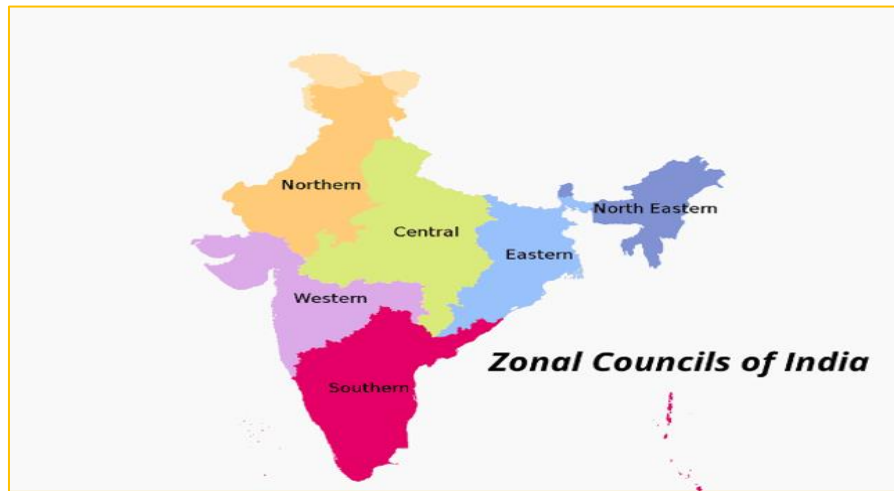
- Article 101(4) of the Indian Constitution provides that:
- If a Member of Parliament (MP) is absent from the House for 60 consecutive days without permission, their seat may be declared vacant.
- The counting of days excludes periods when Parliament is not in session.
- The decision regarding disqualification is taken by the Speaker (Lok Sabha) or Chairman (Rajya Sabha).

### • **Purpose of Article 101(4)**

- Ensures that MPs actively participate in legislative proceedings.
- Prevents neglect of parliamentary responsibilities by elected representatives.
- Upholds the principle of accountability in democracy.
- Exceptions & Considerations
- MPs can apply for leave of absence due to valid reasons such as illness, detention, or unavoidable circumstances.
- If the House grants permission, the MP does not lose their seat.
- In case of legal detention, courts may intervene to allow attendance if required.

## Zonal Councils

- **Context:** Recently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah presided over the 27th meeting of the Western Zonal Council in Pune.



- **About Zonal Councils**

- Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru introduced the concept of zonal councils in 1956 during the debate on the States Reorganisation Commission report.
- It was introduced as a mechanism to promote inter-state cooperation and resolve issues arising from state linguistic reorganizations.
- These councils serve as advisory and cooperative platforms between states and the Centre.

- **Composition of Zonal Councils**

- Each Zonal Council consists of:
  - Union Home Minister – Chairman of all councils.
  - Chief Ministers of the states in a zone – Vice-Chairman (on a rotational basis for one year).
  - Two Ministers from each state – Nominated by the respective Governor.
  - Two representatives from Union Territories in the zone.
  - One Planning Commission nominee for each council.
  - Chief Secretaries and senior officials from the states.

- **Standing Committees**

- Each council has a Standing Committee comprising Chief Secretaries of member states.
- These committees meet periodically to resolve issues and prepare the groundwork for council meetings.
- Representatives from Central Ministries and NITI Aayog attend based on necessity.

- **Functions and Role of Zonal Councils**

- It acts as a platform for resolving Centre-State and inter-state disputes.
- It facilitates regional cooperation in economic and social planning.
- It discusses and resolves issues related to:
  - Border disputes.
  - Linguistic minorities.

- Inter-state transport
- Other matters under the States Reorganisation Act.
- It fosters cooperative and competitive federalism

### Three-Language Formula

- **Context:** The controversy over the three-language policy has resurfaced due to the ongoing conflict between the Tamil Nadu government and the Union government regarding its implementation under the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

## Three-Language Formula



- **About Three-Language Formula**

- The three-language formula was first introduced in the National Education Policy (NEP), 1968 and was later retained with modifications in the NEP 2020.
- The policy aims to promote multilingualism and national integration among students across India.
- The main objective of the three-language formula is to ensure that students learn multiple languages, which helps in enhancing communication skills and understanding different cultures.
- The policy mandates that students should study at least two Indian languages along with English.
- The three-language formula requires students to study three languages during their school education.
- At least two of these languages must be Indian languages, while the third language can be English or another language chosen by the student, the region, or the State.
- Unlike previous versions of the policy, the NEP 2020 does not impose any particular language on students or States.
- It allows States, regions, and students to have the flexibility to choose the languages they wish to learn, provided that at least two of the three languages are of Indian origin.
- **Challenges:** The three-language formula has faced opposition from non-Hindi-speaking States, especially Tamil Nadu, which has followed a two-language policy (Tamil and English) in its government schools for decades.
- Additionally, there is a shortage of qualified teachers to teach certain regional languages, which makes implementation difficult.
- Also, many government schools face resource constraints, making it challenging to introduce an additional language course.

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# Art & Culture

## Chapter 4



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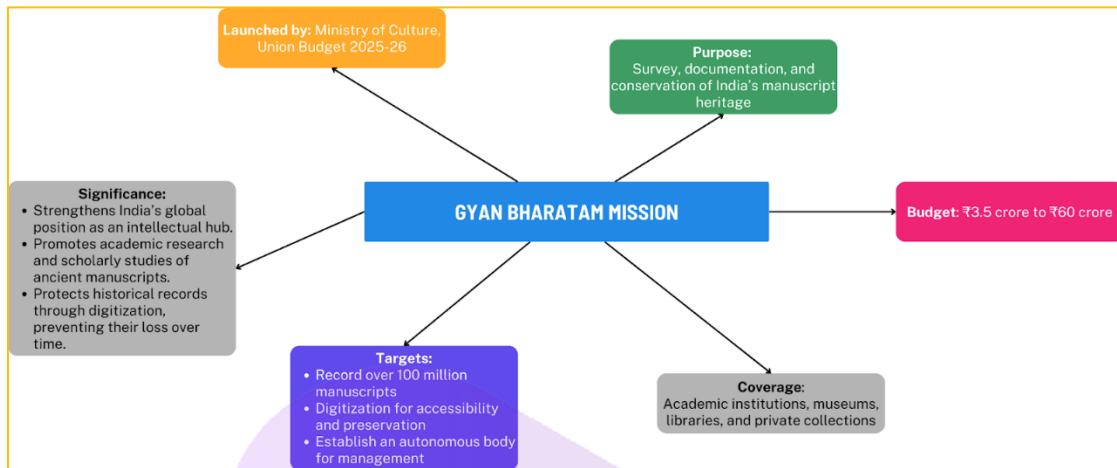
## Topics in Focus

- **Gyan Bharatam Mission:** Recently, the Union Budget 2025-26 has introduced the 'Gyan Bharatam Mission'.
- **Dashavatar Temple:** Dashavatar, a traditional theatre form of Maharashtra and Goa, remains culturally significant. The centuries-old traditional theatre form Dashavatar, performed in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district and parts of north Goa, is in the spotlight as it continues to preserve its cultural essence despite changing times.
- **Fort William Renamed as Vijay Durg:** Indian Army renamed Fort William in Kolkata as Vijay Durg to remove colonial influences.
- **Dokra Art:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted an exquisite Dokra sculpture to French President Emmanuel Macron during his visit to France in February 2025.
- **Pagri Sambhal Diwas:** On February 23, 2021, Pagri Sambhal Diwas was established to honor Ajit Singh's contributions and recognize the continuing struggles of farmers.
- **Tea Horse Road:** Recently, China's Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong, shared a post on X about the historic Tea Horse Road, a trade route spanning over 2,000 km that connected China to India through Tibet.
- **Battle of Karnal:** The Battle of Karnal on February 24, 1739, was a pivotal moment in the history of the Mughal Empire.
- **Soligas Tribe:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Soligas in his Mann Ki Baat program for their role in tiger conservation.
- **Chandra Shekhar Azad:** Chandra Shekhar Azad is in the news as February 27, 2025, marked the anniversary of his martyrdom.
- **Cholanaikkan tribe:** The innovative initiative by Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK) to provide education to a bed-ridden tribal girl from the Cholanaikkan tribe in Malappuram, Kerala, has made headlines.

## About Gyan Bharatam Mission

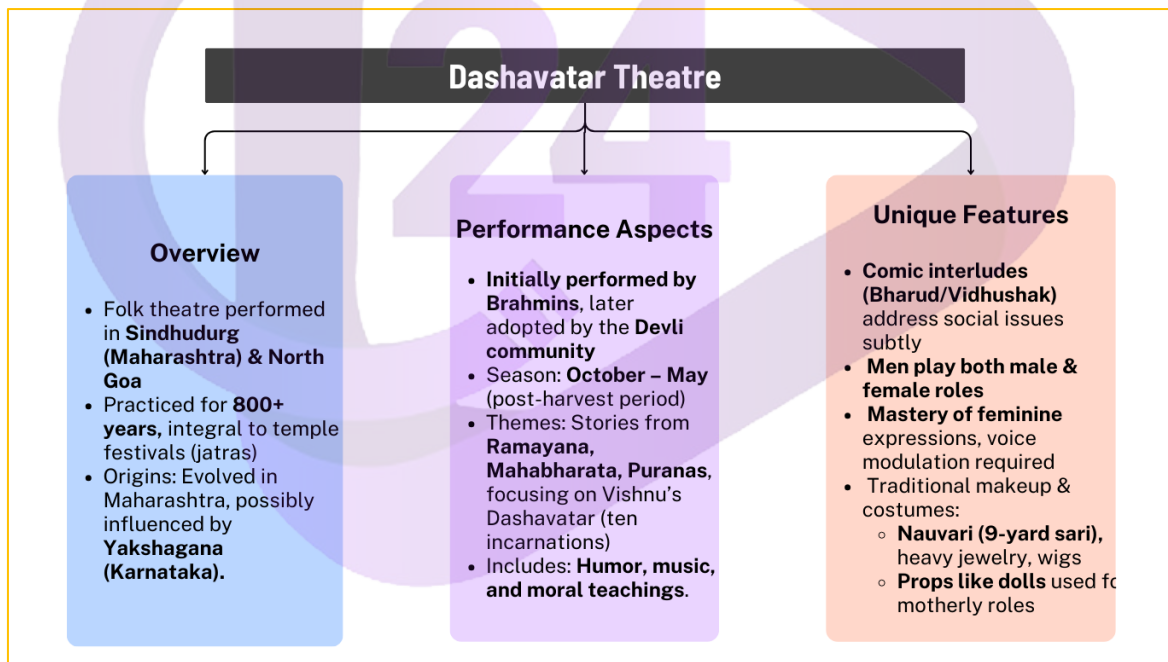
- The Gyan Bharatam Mission has been launched to conduct a comprehensive survey, documentation, and conservation of India's rich manuscript heritage.
- It aims to cover over one crore manuscripts spread across academic institutions, museums, libraries, and private collections.
- A significant aspect of the Gyan Bharatam Mission is the establishment of the National Digital Repository of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).
- This digital platform will serve as a comprehensive resource for archiving and sharing traditional wisdom, making it accessible to researchers, students, and institutions worldwide.

- By integrating India’s ancient knowledge—spanning fields such as Ayurveda, mathematics, astronomy, linguistics, and philosophy with modern education and technology, the mission aims to encourage research, innovation, and sustainable development.



### Dashavatar Theatre

- **Context:** The centuries-old traditional theatre form Dashavatar, performed in Maharashtra’s Sindhudurg district and parts of north Goa, is in the spotlight as it continues to preserve its cultural essence despite changing times.



- **About Dashavatar Theatre**

- Dashavatar is a traditional folk theatre form performed in Maharashtra’s Sindhudurg district and parts of north Goa.
- The art form has been practiced for over 800 years and continues to be a key part of local temple festivals (jatras).
- This theatre originated in Maharashtra, possibly influenced by Karnataka’s Yakshagana.
- It was initially performed only by Brahmins, later taken up by the Devli community to keep the tradition alive.

- It is performed between October (post-harvest) and May.
- Stories are based on the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranas, featuring Vishnu's ten incarnations. It includes humor, music, and moral lessons to engage audiences.
- Comic interludes (Bharud or Vidhushak) provide entertainment while subtly addressing social issues.
- A unique feature of Dashavatar is that men play both male and female characters.
- It requires mastery of feminine mannerisms, expressions, and voice modulation.
- The performers use traditional makeup techniques, often learned through experience.
- Costumes include the nauvari (nine-yard sari), heavy jewelry, and wigs. Actors carry props like dolls when playing motherly roles.

### **Fort William Renamed as Vijay Durg**

- **Context:** In a significant move towards eliminating colonial influences in the Indian Armed Forces, Fort William, the Eastern Command Headquarters of the Indian Army in Kolkata, has been officially renamed Vijay Durg.
- **Historical Significance of Fort William**
  - Originally constructed by the British in 1781, Fort William was named after King William III of England.
  - It has served as a strategic military base for over two centuries and continues to be a key command center for India's Eastern Army Command.
  - The fort played a crucial role in British colonial rule, symbolizing their military presence in eastern India.
- **About Renaming of Vijay Durg**
  - The new name, Vijay Durg, draws inspiration from the historic fort in Maharashtra, which was a naval base for the Marathas under Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.
  - Vijay Durg Fort, located along the Sindhudurg coast, was a stronghold of Maratha naval supremacy, representing Indian resilience and military strength.
  - Renaming Fort William to Vijay Durg signifies a shift towards Indian heritage and military pride over colonial legacy.
- **Other Renaming Initiatives at Fort William**
  - Kitchener House inside Fort William has been renamed Manekshaw House, after Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, India's first Field Marshal and hero of the 1971 Indo-Pak war.
  - South Gate, previously called St. George's Gate, has been renamed Shivaji Gate, honoring Chhatrapati Shivaji's legacy.

### **Dokra Artwork**

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted an exquisite Dokra sculpture to French President Emmanuel Macron during his visit to France in February 2025.



- **About Dokra Artwork**

- Dokra artwork is an ancient and celebrated form of metal casting that originated in India over 4,000 years ago.
- It is known for its rustic charm and intricate detailing, this art form continues to thrive, particularly in regions like Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Odisha.
- Dokra art is a bridge connecting India's present with its tribal heritage. It reflects the harmony between humans and nature, the richness of folk traditions, and the creative spirit of indigenous artisans.
- It is globally admired for its unique aesthetics and the use of a time-honoured technique called the lost-wax casting process.
- Dokra pieces often depict tribal life, nature, animals, deities, and musicians. Each artwork tells a story:
  - Musicians and Dancers: Symbolize the central role of music and celebration in tribal culture.
  - Animals like Elephants and Horses: Represent power, prosperity, and reverence for nature.
  - Deities: Reflect indigenous spiritual beliefs and cultural practices.

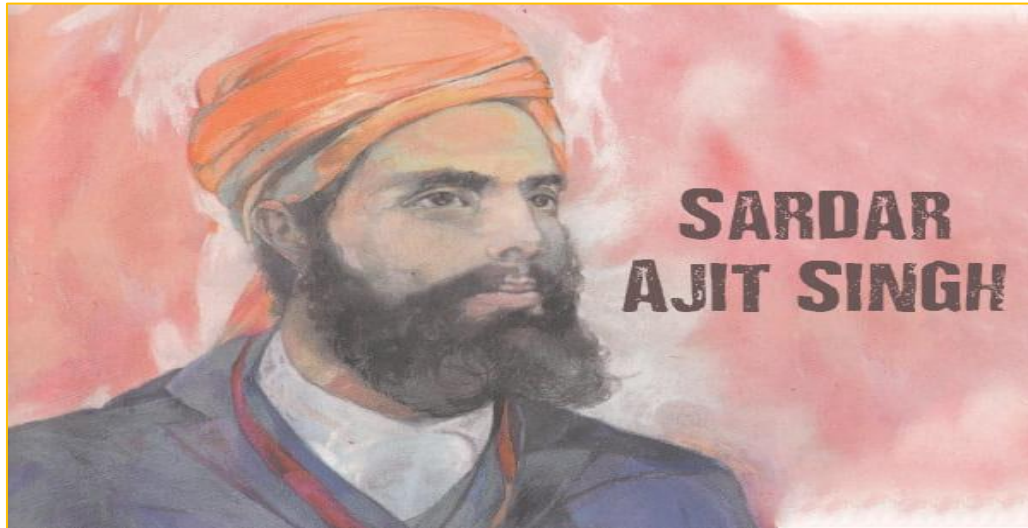
- **Distinctive Features of Dokra Art**

- Handcrafted Uniqueness: No two pieces are identical, making each work a one-of-a-kind creation.
- Earthy, Antique Look: The rustic finish and natural imperfections add to the aesthetic charm.
- Tribal Essence: The motifs and patterns are deeply rooted in the everyday life and folklore of tribal communities.

### **Ajit Singh- Indian Freedom Fighter**

- **Context:** On February 23, 2021, Pagri Sambhal Diwas was established to honor Ajit Singh's contributions and recognize the continuing struggles of farmers.



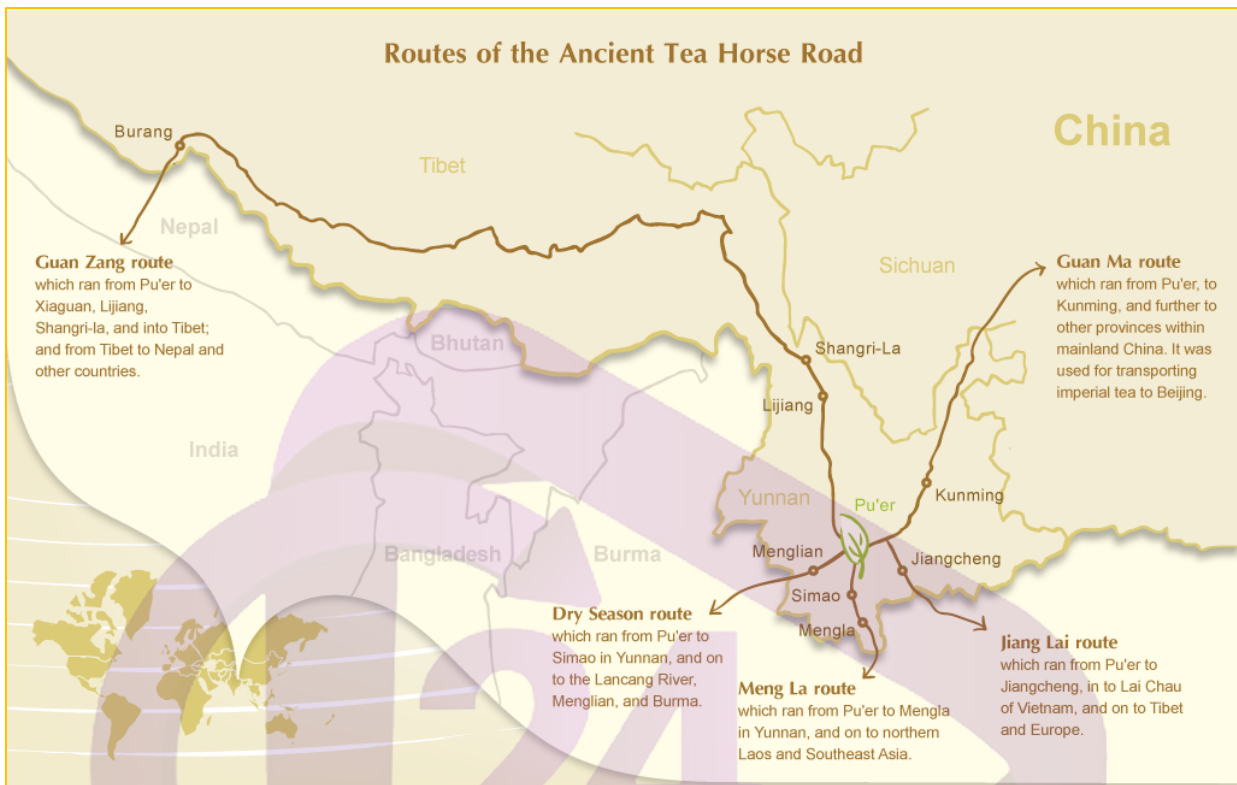


- **About Ajit Singh**

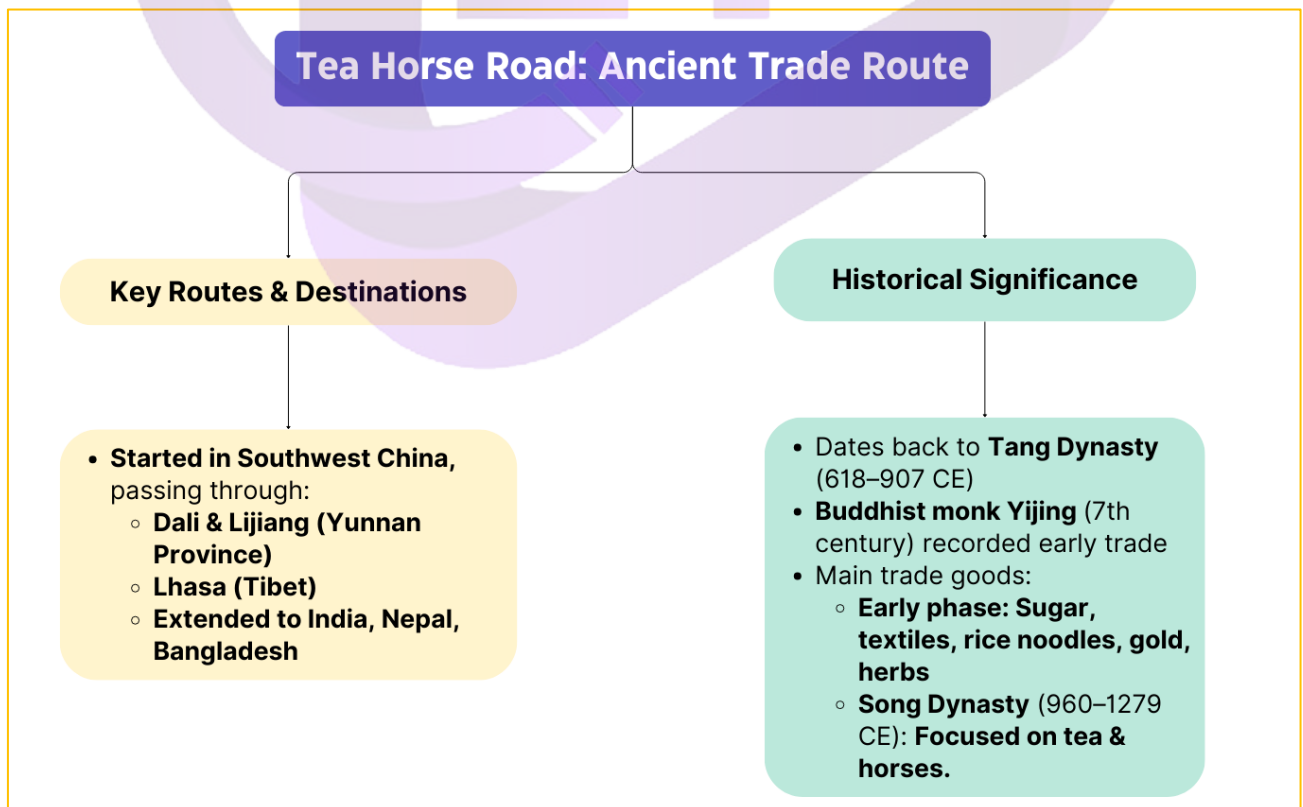
- Ajit Singh (born February 23, 1881) was the younger brother of Sardar Kishan Singh and the uncle of Shaheed Bhagat Singh.
- Ajit Singh played a key role in the Pagri Sambhal Jatta Movement (1907) which was peasant agitation against the oppressive Colonisation and Doab Bari Acts, which denied land ownership to farmers.
- He was a powerful orator and he addressed 19 of 33 protest meetings in Punjab. His speech in Rawalpindi on April 21, 1907, was deemed seditious, leading to his arrest on June 2, 1907, alongside Lala Lajpat Rai.
- Both were deported to Mandalay prison under Regulation III of 1818.
- Released after six months, he attended the Surat Congress session and founded the Bharat Mata Society, promoting Indian independence.
- He later established the Bharat Mata Book Agency, which published anti-British literature, attracting scrutiny from the colonial government.
- To evade British persecution, Ajit Singh moved to Iran and later Paris, where he founded the Indian Revolutionary Association. He met Lenin, Trotsky, and Mussolini while forging global alliances for India's freedom.
- In 1913, he moved to Brazil and collaborated with the Ghadar Party and worked alongside revolutionaries such as Bhai Rattan Singh, Teja Singh Swatantra, and Baba Bhagat Singh Bilga.
- In 1932, he returned to Europe and contributed to the Azad Hind Fauj in Italy, attempting to recruit Indian soldiers.
- He was captured by Allied forces in 1945, he was imprisoned in Italy and Germany until December 1945.
- As India neared independence, he was released from jail.

## Tea Horse Trade

- Context:** Recently, China's Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong, shared a post on X about the historic Tea Horse Road, a trade route spanning over 2,000 km that connected China to India through Tibet.



- About Tea Horse Road**



- An old stone path in Sichuan (left) and porters carrying tea in China in 1908.

- It is an ancient trade route connecting China to India via Tibet. It spanned over 2,000 km, passing through challenging mountainous terrain.
- The Tea Horse Road was not a single route but rather a network of interconnected paths that originated in southwest China and extended to the Indian subcontinent.
- The two primary routes traversed cities such as Dali and Lijiang in Yunnan province before reaching Lhasa in Tibet. From there, they branched out into present-day India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.
- These routes have elevations as high as 10,000 feet.
- It dates back to the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE). Buddhist monk Yijing (7th century) documented early trade on this route.
- It initially facilitated trade in sugar, textiles, rice noodles, Tibetan gold, and herbs. By the Song dynasty (960-1279 CE), it became focused on tea and horses.
- **Economic & Cultural Importance**
  - Tea Trade: Tibetans highly valued tea, using it as food and currency.
  - Horse Trade: China needed Tibetan horses for military and transport.
  - Cultural Exchange: Facilitated trade in medicine, textiles, and religious ideas.
  - Contributed to the development of Lijiang as a major trade hub.

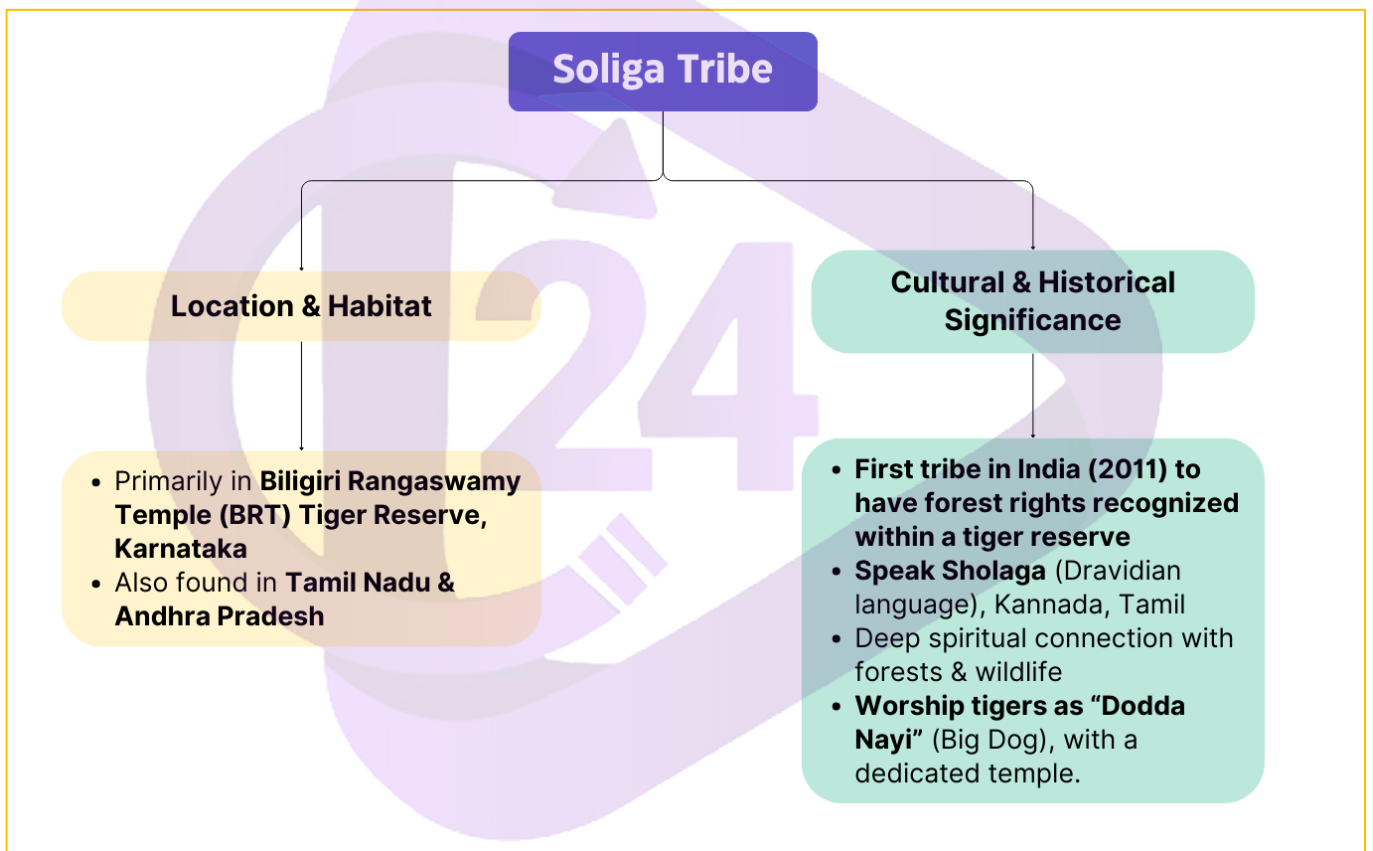
### **Battle of Karnal**

- **Context:** The Battle of Karnal on February 24, 1739, was a pivotal moment in the history of the Mughal Empire.
- **About Battle of Karnal (1739)**
  - The Battle of Karnal, fought on February 24, 1739, was a decisive conflict between the Persian emperor Nadir Shah and the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah Rangila.
  - By the early 18th century, the Mughal Empire was in decline due to administrative inefficiencies, economic strain, and constant internal revolts.
  - Meanwhile, Nadir Shah of Persia, a brilliant military strategist, had consolidated power in Iran and launched expansionist campaigns.
  - After conquering Kandahar in 1738, he invaded India through the Khyber Pass, rapidly overcoming Mughal territories and advancing toward Delhi.
- **The Battle & Its Result**
  - At Karnal (present-day Haryana), the vastly superior 300,000-strong Mughal army, including war elephants and heavy cavalry, faced Nadir Shah's 55,000 well-trained Persian troops.
  - Despite their numbers, the Mughals suffered a devastating defeat within three hours, due to outdated battle tactics and superior Persian firepower.

- Muhammad Shah was captured, and Nadir Shah proceeded to plunder Delhi, looting its treasures, including the Peacock Throne and the Koh-i-Noor diamond.
- He also ordered a brutal massacre of thousands of civilians.
- While Nadir Shah eventually restored Muhammad Shah to the throne, the Mughal Empire never recovered from this humiliation.
- The treasury was emptied, and Mughal authority became largely symbolic, paving the way for the rise of regional powers and, eventually, British domination in India.

### Soliga Tribe

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Soligas in his Mann Ki Baat program for their role in tiger conservation.
- **About Soliga Tribe**



- The Soliga tribe primarily inhabits the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple (BRT) Tiger Reserve in Chamarajanagar district, Karnataka.
- They are also found in parts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.
- In 2011, the Soligas were the first tribal community in India to have their forest rights legally recognized within a tiger reserve.
- The Soligas communicate in Sholaga, a Dravidian language, as well as Kannada and Tamil.
- The Soligas have a deep-rooted cultural connection with the forest and wildlife.
- Soligas possess extensive knowledge of medicinal plants and forest ecology which helps in conservation efforts.

- They worship tigers, referring to them as “Dodda Nayi” (Big Dog) and have a temple dedicated to them.
  - Their lifestyle is simple, sustainable, and eco-friendly.
  - They reside in simple, single-room huts made of bamboo and mud. They create distinctive utility items from natural materials, including the ‘jottai,’ a cup crafted from leaves.
- **Role in Conservation:**
    - The Soligas coexist with wildlife and contribute significantly to tiger conservation in BRT Tiger Reserve.
    - Their sustainable harvesting methods ensure that natural resources are shared with animals.
    - They assist the Forest Department in fire prevention and habitat protection.

### **Chandra Shekhar Azad**

- **Context:** Chandra Shekhar Azad is in the news as February 27, 2025, marked the anniversary of his martyrdom.
- **About Chandra Shekhar Azad (1906–1931)**
  - He was a revolutionary freedom fighter who played a crucial role in India’s struggle for independence against British rule.
  - He was born on July 23, 1906, in Bhabhra, Madhya Pradesh.
  - He was deeply influenced by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and joined the Non-Cooperation Movement at a young age.
  - When he was arrested, he boldly declared his name as “Azad” (Free) in court and was sentenced to 15 lashes as punishment.
  - On February 27, 1931, he was cornered by British police in Alfred Park, Allahabad.
  - Instead of surrendering, he fought valiantly and ultimately shot himself with his last bullet, fulfilling his vow to never be captured alive.
- **Key Contributions to the Freedom Struggle**
  - **Joining the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) (1924):** Chandra Shekhar Azad became a member of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA), which was led by Ram Prasad Bismil. He played a key role in raising funds for revolutionary activities, often through political dacoities.
  - **Kakori Train Robbery (1925):** Azad was involved in the infamous Kakori Train Robbery, in which revolutionaries looted a British train carrying treasury money.
  - **Reorganizing HRA into the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) (1928):** In 1928, Azad, along with Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries, transformed the HRA into the

Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). Under this new identity, the organization embraced socialist ideology and aimed to overthrow British rule through armed resistance.

- Assassination of John Saunders (1928): Azad and his comrades planned the assassination of James A. Scott, the British police officer responsible for the attack on Lala Lajpat Rai, who had died due to police brutality. However, due to mistaken identity, they ended up killing John Saunders instead.
- Attempt to Blow Up Lord Irwin's Train (1929): In an attempt to assassinate Viceroy Lord Irwin, Azad and his comrades planned to blow up his train. However, the plan ultimately failed.

### **Cholanaikkan Tribe**

- **Context:** The innovative initiative by Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK) to provide education to a bed-ridden tribal girl from the Cholanaikkan tribe in Malappuram, Kerala, has made headlines.
- **About Cholanaikkan Tribe**
  - The Cholanaikkan are a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) living in the forests of Kerala, India.
  - They are primarily found in the Nilambur forests of Malappuram district and are considered one of the last remaining hunter-gatherer tribes in South India.
  - They traditionally live in rock shelters and caves called Kallu Arais.
  - They rely on hunting, and gathering honey, tubers, and wild fruits for sustenance.
  - The community speaks a distinct Dravidian language called Cholanaikkan.
  - They have minimal contact with the outside world and depend heavily on forest resources.

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# Appointments & Resignation

## Chapter 5



## National

- Gyanesh Kumar appointed as India's next Chief Election Commissioner.
- Dr. Vivek Joshi takes charge as Election Commissioner.
- Rekha Gupta sworn in as the fourth woman Chief Minister of Delhi.
- Mrityunjay Srikantan appointed Deputy Secretary in the Finance Ministry.
- Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran's tenure extended until March 2027.
- Dhananjay Shukla appointed President of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI).
- N Biren Singh resigns as Manipur's Chief Minister amid BJP internal discord.

## International





- **Kash Patel becomes the first Indian-American FBI Director.**
- **Jay Shah elected as a member of the MCC Advisory Board.**
- **Usha Vance becomes the first Indian-American Second Lady of the U.S.**
- **Micheál Martin re-elected as Irish Prime Minister.**
- **Bart de Wever sworn in as Belgium’s Prime Minister on 3rd February 2025.**

## **Gyanesh Kumar has been appointed as India’s next Chief Election Commissioner**

### **Context:**

1. Gyanesh Kumar has been appointed as India’s next Chief Election Commissioner, succeeding Rajiv Kumar.
2. Dr. Vivek Joshi took charge of the post of Election Commissioner.

<b>In News</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gyanesh Kumar was appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India on February 17, 2025.</b></li> <li>• <b>He is the first CEC appointed under the new law governing Election Commission (EC) selections.</b></li> <li>• <b>Dr. Vivek Joshi took charge of the post of Election Commissioner</b></li> </ul>
<b>Tenure</b>	February 19, 2025 – January 26, 2029
<b>Selection Process</b>	Appointed by a three-member committee led by PM Narendra Modi; selection confirmed two days before assuming office.
<b>Predecessor</b>	Rajiv Kumar
<b>Educational Background</b>	B.Tech in Civil Engineering (IIT Kanpur) – Business Finance (ICFAI, India) – Environmental Economics (Harvard University, USA)
<b>Administrative Career</b>	1988-batch IAS officer (Kerala cadre) – Served in key roles in Kerala Government and Central Government
<b>Key Government Positions</b>	Joint Secretary (Ministry of Defence) – Additional Secretary (Ministry of Home Affairs) – Secretary (Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs & Ministry of Cooperation) – Played a role in implementing decisions post-Article 370 abrogation
<b>Journey in Election Commission</b>	Retired as Union Cooperation Secretary (Jan 31, 2024) – Appointed Election Commissioner (March 14, 2024) – Ensured free and fair elections in India

## Topics in Focus

### The Election Commission of India (ECI)

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a **constitutional body** established under **Articles 324-329 (Part XV)** of the Indian Constitution. Since **1993**, the ECI has been composed of **one Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commissioners (ECs)** to oversee free and fair elections across India.
- **Functions of the ECI:**
  - The ECI is responsible for conducting elections for:
    - **Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**
    - **State Legislative Assemblies**
    - **President and Vice President of India**
  - Additionally, **National Voters' Day** is observed on **January 25** annually since **2011** to commemorate the foundation of the ECI.
- **Key Provisions of the 2023 Act**
  - The **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioner Act, 2023** introduces several reforms aimed at enhancing the autonomy of the ECI:
  - **Salary & Benefits:** The CEC and ECs will receive salaries and benefits equivalent to a Supreme Court judge.
  - **Legal Immunity:** Granted immunity from **civil and criminal proceedings** related to their official duties.
  - **Selection Process:** Appointments will be made through a **Search and Selection Committee**, ensuring a structured selection mechanism.
  - **Fixed Tenure:** The CEC and ECs will have a defined tenure to maintain stability and autonomy.
- **Issues Faced by the ECI**
  - Despite these reforms, the Election Commission of India continues to face several challenges:
    - **Questionable Autonomy:**
      - The **selection process** involves a committee with a **majority of government representatives**, raising concerns about political influence.
    - **Removal Process:**
      - Unlike the CEC, the ECs can be removed based on the **CEC's recommendation**, potentially impacting their independence.
    - **Limited Powers:**

- The ECI lacks the authority to **de-register political parties**, even in cases of severe violations.

➤ **Lack of Independent Staff:**

- The ECI depends on **government employees**, rather than having a **dedicated workforce**, which affects its operational independence.

## Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India

### • Role and Governance

- The **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)** heads the ECI and ensures the conduct of free and fair elections in India. The role is governed by **Article 324** of the Indian Constitution, which grants the ECI **superintendence, direction, and control** over elections.

### • Appointment Process

- **Previously:** The CEC was appointed by the **President** on the **Prime Minister's recommendation**.
- **Under the 2023 Act:**
  - A **Selection Committee** recommends candidates, consisting of:
    - The **Prime Minister** (Chairperson)
    - A **Union Cabinet Minister**
    - The **Leader of the Opposition** in the Lok Sabha
  - A **Search Committee**, chaired by the **Law Minister**, shortlists names for consideration.

### • Eligibility Criteria

- Under the new Act, candidates for CEC and ECs must:
  - Be **persons of integrity**
  - Have **knowledge and experience** in **election management**
  - Be or have been a **Secretary (or equivalent) to the government**
  - **Tenure and Service Conditions**
  - **Tenure:** **Six years** or until the age of **65 years**, whichever is earlier.
  - **Salary & Benefits:** Equivalent to that of a **Cabinet Secretary**.

### • Removal Process

- The **CEC** can only be removed in the manner applicable to a **Supreme Court judge**.
- The **ECs** may be removed **only upon the recommendation of the CEC**.

### • Powers and Functions of the CEC

- The **Chief Election Commissioner** holds significant authority in overseeing India's electoral processes, including:

- **Conducting Elections:** Ensures smooth elections for **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Assemblies, and the President & Vice President** of India.
- **Regulating Political Parties:** Monitors **election funding** and enforces the **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)**.
- **Supervising Voter Registration:** Manages electoral rolls and ensures **fair voting processes**.
- **Disqualification of Candidates:** Can **disqualify candidates** for **electoral malpractices** and even **cancel elections** in cases of irregularities.
- **Advisory Role:** Advises the **President and Governors** on election-related matters.

### Conclusion

- The **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioner Act, 2023**, introduces significant reforms aimed at enhancing the autonomy and efficiency of the Election Commission of India. However, concerns remain regarding the selection process, independence, and limited powers of the ECI. Addressing these challenges is crucial to strengthening India's democratic framework and ensuring truly **free and fair elections**.

### 3. Rekha Gupta Appointed as Chief Minister of Delhi

#### Why in News?

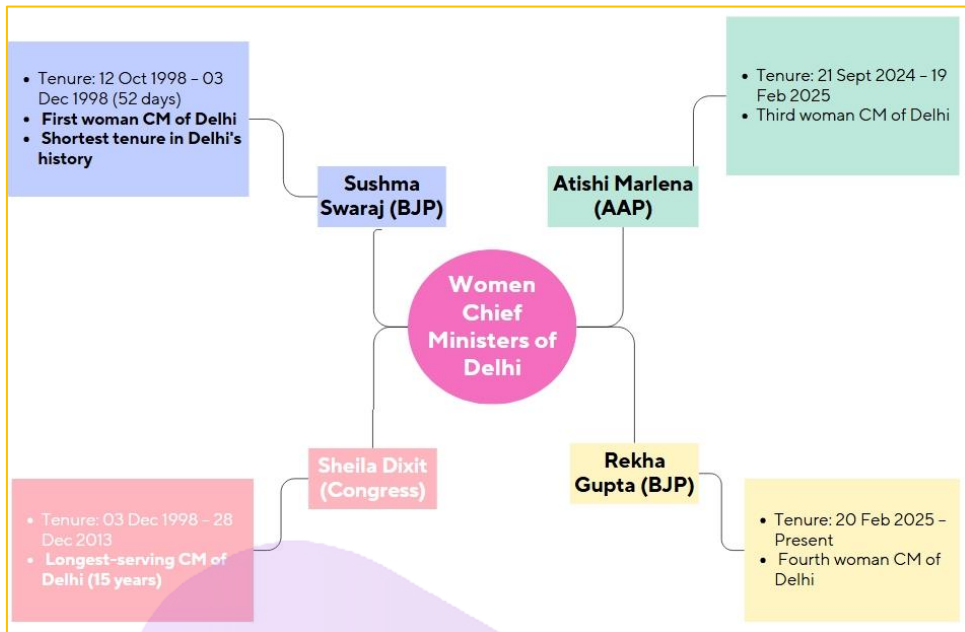
- Rekha Gupta took oath as the fourth woman and 9th Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi on 20 February 2025.
- Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma took oath as Deputy Chief Minister.
- Along with her, six cabinet ministers also took oath, administered by Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena.

#### About Rekha Gupta

- First-time MLA from Shalimar Bagh constituency.
- Former President and General Secretary of Delhi University Students Union.
- Served as General Secretary of BJP Mahila Morcha (Delhi) and member of the National Executive Committee.
- Former elected member of Delhi Municipal Corporation.

#### Women Chief Ministers in Delhi

1. Sushma Swaraj (12 Oct 1998 – 03 Dec 1998) – BJP's first woman CM and held the shortest tenure (52 days).
2. Sheila Dixit (03 Dec 1998 – 28 Dec 2013) – Longest-serving CM of Delhi.
3. Atishi Marlena (21 Sept 2024 – 19 Feb 2025) – Third woman CM.
4. Rekha Gupta (20 Feb 2025 – Present) – Fourth woman CM.



### Delhi Assembly Elections 2025

- Date: 5 February 2025
- Seats: 70
- Results: BJP won 48 seats, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won 22 seats.

### Provisions for Chief Minister and Ministers in Delhi

- Delhi is a Union Territory with a Legislative Assembly, along with Puducherry and Jammu & Kashmir.
- Governed by Articles 239AA and 239AB (added via 66th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1991).
- The Chief Minister is appointed by the President.
- Maximum number of ministers: Not more than 10% of total assembly members.

### 4. Dhananjay Shukla has been appointed as the President of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) for this year.

Full Name	Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI)
<b>Recognition</b>	The only recognized professional body in India to develop and regulate the profession of Company Secretaries
<b>Established Under</b>	Company Secretaries Act, 1980
<b>Nodal Ministry</b>	Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India
<b>Headquarters</b>	New Delhi
<b>Regional Offices</b>	New Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai
<b>Chapters</b>	72 Chapters across India
<b>Membership &amp; Enrollment</b>	Over 65,000 members and 2.5 lakh students currently enrolled



# Awards

## Chapter 6



## Topics in Focus

- Sanjay Potam receives President's Medal for Gallantry for the third time.
- Indian short film 'Anuja' earns Oscars 2025 nomination (Best Live Action Short Film).
- Doordarshan wins ECI Media Award for voter awareness initiatives.
- Uttarakhand's Information Dept. wins best tableau award at the 76th Republic Day.
- Uttar Pradesh's 'Mahakumbh' tableau and J&K Rifles win top awards at Republic Day.
- Tshego Gaelae becomes first Black Mrs World in pageant's 40-year history.
- Hiten Patel wins Best Architect Award for "Adwait – A Royal Residence" at GABA 2025.
- Indian-American Chandrika Tandon wins Grammy for her album "Triveni".
- Coal India honored with the Golden Peacock CSR Award 2024.
- Rakesh Roshan to receive Outstanding Achievement Award at IIFA 2025.
- Reliance New Energy Battery awarded 10 GWh capacity under PLI ACC Scheme.
- Dr. Bhagyashree Prasad Patil receives Vishalakshi Award 2025 from President Droupadi Murmu.
- Nagaland Forest Management Project wins SKOCH Award for conservation efforts.
- Indian student Vishwa Rajkumar wins 'Memory League' World Championship 2025.
- Sunil Bharti Mittal honored with Knight Commander of the British Empire (KBE).
- Sameer Kanodia wins CEO of the Year Award at the 23rd Business Leader Awards.
- Raj Kamal Jha wins 'Banaras Lit Fest Award' for *The Patient in Bed Number 12*

## Indian Short Film *Anuja* Nominated for Best Live Action Short Film at the 97th Academy Awards

### • Key Highlights:

➤ *Anuja* nominated for **Best Live Action Short Film** at the **97th Academy Awards**.

➤ **Directed by:** Adam J. Graves.

➤ **Produced by:** Priyanka Chopra, Guneet Monga, and Mindy Kaling.

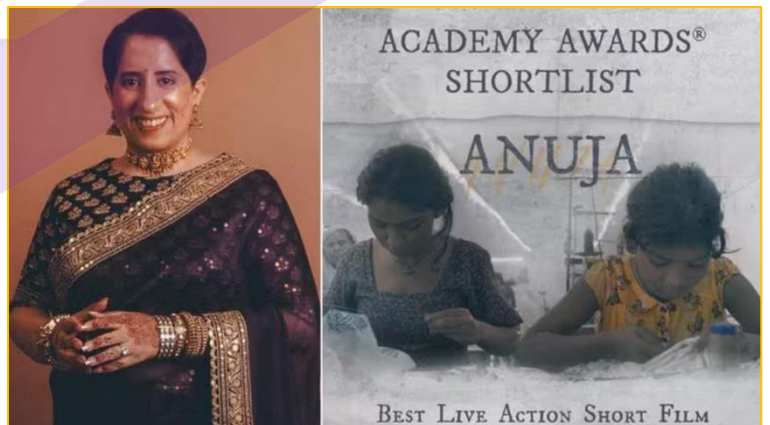
➤ **Theme:** Child labor and sibling bond.

➤ **Story:** Follows a nine-year-old girl, Anuja, working in a Delhi garment factory with her sister, Palak.

➤ **Collaborators:** Salaam Baalak Trust, Shine Global, and Krushan Naik Films.

### • Awards:

➤ **Best Live Action Short Award** – HollyShorts Film Festival (Aug 19, 2024).



- **Audience Award for Short Film** – Montclair Film Festival (Oct 27, 2024).
- **Streaming Platform:** Netflix.
- **97th Academy Awards Date:** March 2, 2025, at the **Dolby Theatre**.

**Proud Moment for Doordarshan: Bestowed with ECI Media Award for Voter Awareness in Electronic Media (TV) Category**

- **Key Highlights:**
  - **Awarded for:** Voter awareness and education in **Electronic Media (TV)** category.
  - **Recognised for:** "Chunav Ka Parv Desh Ka Garv" series during **Lok Sabha Elections 2024**.
  - **Presented by:** President of India, **Smt. Droupadi Murmu**.
  - **Received by:** DG Doordarshan, **Ms. Kanchan Prasad**.
- **Campaign Features:**
  - **30 voter education short films** developed and broadcasted.
  - **Multilingual outreach** through DD National, DD India, and DD News.
  - **Engaging advertisements:** L-band ads, mug branding, and 45-sec ad spots.

**Uttarakhand – Best Tableau Award at 76th Republic Day:**

- **Theme:** 38th National Games and traditional sport Mallakhamb.
- **Awarded to:** Department of Information, Uttarakhand.
- **Presented by:** Governor **Lt. Gen. Gurmeet Singh (Retd)** and CM **Pushkar Singh Dhami**.
- **Received by:** DG Information, **Banshidhar Tiwari**.



- **National Republic Day Tableau Awards:**
  - **First Prize:** Uttar Pradesh – "Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas".
  - **Second Prize:** Tripura – "Eternal Reverence: The Worship of 14 Deities - Kharchi Puja".
  - **Third Prize:** Andhra Pradesh – "Etikoppaka Bommalu - Eco-Friendly Wooden Toys".
  - **Most Popular Tableau:** Gujarat – "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat Aur Vikas".
- **Best Marching Contingents:**
  - **Best Services Contingent:** Jammu & Kashmir Rifles.
  - **Best CAPF & Auxiliary Contingent:** Delhi Police

**Chandrika Tandon Wins Grammy for Triveni:**

- **Category:** Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album.
- **Album:** *Triveni*.
- **Collaborators:** South African flautist **Wouter Kellerman**, Japanese cellist **Eru Matsumoto**.



- **Event:** 67th Grammy Awards, **Feb 2, 2025, Crypto.com Arena, Los Angeles.**
- **Other Nominees:** Ricky Kej, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Anoushka Shankar, Radhika Vekaria.
- **Chandrika Tandon:** Indian-American vocalist, entrepreneur, and sister of former PepsiCo CEO **Indra Nooyi.**



#### **Dr. Bhagyashree Patil Receives Vishalakshi Award 2025:**

- **Awarded for:** Leadership in education.
- **Event:** International Women's Conference 2025, organized by **The Art of Living.**
- **Presented by:** **President of India, Droupadi Murmu.**
- **Notable Attendees:** Governor of Karnataka **Thaawarchand Gehlot, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Hema Malini.**
- **Recognition:** Honors outstanding women making a significant impact in various fields.
- **Dr. Bhagyashree Patil:**
  - Pro-Chancellor of **Dr. D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Pimpri, Pune.**
  - Visionary educationist, entrepreneur, and philanthropist.
  - Dedicated to holistic education, faculty development, and academic excellence.

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# National

## Chapter 7

आजकाल की 24 घण्टी का समय, आज का समय  
 बहुत बड़े है  
 विशेष धारणीय संगीत श्रृंखला  
**हर कंठ में भारत**

**कृष्य अतिथि**  
 श्री अरुणोस कावला, लखि, संस्कृति मंत्रालय  
**गतिमात्रयी उत्सविति**  
 श्री गौरव द्विवेदी, कृष्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी, प्रसार भारती  
 शुभारंभ : 2 अक्टूरी 2025, प्रातः 10:30 बजे  
 प्रसार मंत्रालय, दिल्ली



# SwaraRail

India Leads in  
**Digital**  
**Well-Being**



## Topics in Focus

- **'Har Kanth Mein Bharat'** classical music series launched by All India Radio and the Ministry of Culture.
- **India to participate** in the **9th Asian Winter Games 2025**.
- **Indian Railways launches 'SwaRail' SuperApp** for seamless railway services.
- **PM launches Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana** to boost agricultural productivity in 100 low-yield districts.
- **CCI approves POSCO India's shareholding acquisition** in POSCO - India Pune Processing Center.
- **India ranks 1st in global digital welfare index.**
- **Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches 'Watershed Yatra'** mass outreach campaign.
- **IICA & CMAI sign MoU** to strengthen India's carbon markets.
- **NIELIT Center of Excellence in Chip Design** inaugurated in Noida.
- **India's first white tiger breeding centre** approved in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Uttar Pradesh rises from 15th to 5th place** in Panchayat transfer rankings.
- **MoU between Ministry of Ayush & Dept of Social Justice** to enhance geriatric healthcare and combat substance abuse.
- **Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurates North East Investment Roadshow** in Chennai.
- **Indian researchers exploring Ross Sea, Antarctica.**
- **NITI Aayog releases higher education policy report.**
- **Translation services expanded in Parliament** for six new languages.
- **India's first indigenous Automated Biomedical Waste Treatment Plant** launched at AIIMS, Delhi.
- **IIAS-DARPG India Conference 2025** inaugurated in New Delhi.
- **National Equestrian Championship 2025** begins in Meerut.
- **ATDC & SECL MoU** to empower 400 unemployed youth in Chhattisgarh & Madhya Pradesh.
- **14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum** inaugurated.
- **'Culinary, Crafts & Clicks' festival** celebrates Indian street food & crafts.
- **ONGC & Tata Power Renewable sign MoU** for battery energy storage solutions.
- **Tata Elxsi & Garuda Aerospace partner** to set up a drone design and certification centre.
- **Aadi Mahotsav 2025** to celebrate tribal culture.
- **'NAKSHA' pilot project** for geospatial land survey in 152 Urban Local Bodies.
- **India's first vertical bifacial solar power plant** launched.
- **DoT & ITU collaborate** on AI-driven digital twin infrastructure.
- **Supreme Court assigns FRI** to enhance Delhi's green cover.

- **20 NBFCs submit RBI registration certificates.**
- **India's first Open-Air Art Wall Museum** inaugurated at Mausam Bhawan.
- **Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM) launched** to standardize digital governance.
- **TRIFED signs MoU** to boost tribal entrepreneurship & rural industries.
- **'Waste Recycling and Climate Change 2025' conference** inaugurated.
- **PM to inaugurate SOUL Leadership Conclave** in New Delhi.
- **BPCL & National Sugar Institute, Kanpur collaborate** on R&D.
- **MoD signs ₹1,220 crore contract** with BEL for Software Defined Radios.
- **IRDAI launches Bima-ASBA via UPI** for easy insurance payments.
- **Amit Shah chairs 27th Western Regional Council meeting** in Pune.
- **Rajnath Singh awards 32 medals** to Indian Coast Guard personnel.
- **HAL Management Academy & DIAT MoU** to advance aerospace tech.
- **CAG & IIT Madras MoU** for sustainable auditing practices.
- **India's first 50 km hyperloop corridor** to be developed with IIT Madras.
- **PM Modi attends Jhumoir Binandini programme** in Assam.
- **International Radiobiology Conference** starts in New Delhi.
- **'India Calling Conference 2025' inaugurated** in Mumbai.
- **Kisan Credit Card benefits 7.72 crore farmers**, crosses ₹10 lakh crore.
- **PM Modi tops Global Approval Ratings 2025** with 75% approval.
- **'One Nation-One Port' (ONOP) & Sagar Ankan-LPPI Index launched** to enhance port efficiency.

### **SwaRail SuperApp launch:**

- **Launch Date:** January 31, 2025 (Beta phase)
- **Purpose:** Single platform for multiple railway services
- **Available On:** Google Play Store & Apple App Store
- **Services Offered:**
  - Ticket bookings (reserved & unreserved)
  - PNR & train inquiries
  - Food ordering
  - Platform & parcel bookings
  - Complaint lodging (*Rail Madad*)
- **Unique Features:**
  - **Single Sign-On** (for IRCTC RailConnect & UTS users)
  - **Secure login** (m-PIN & biometric)
  - **User-friendly onboarding**

- **Beta Testing:** Open for user feedback before the final launch

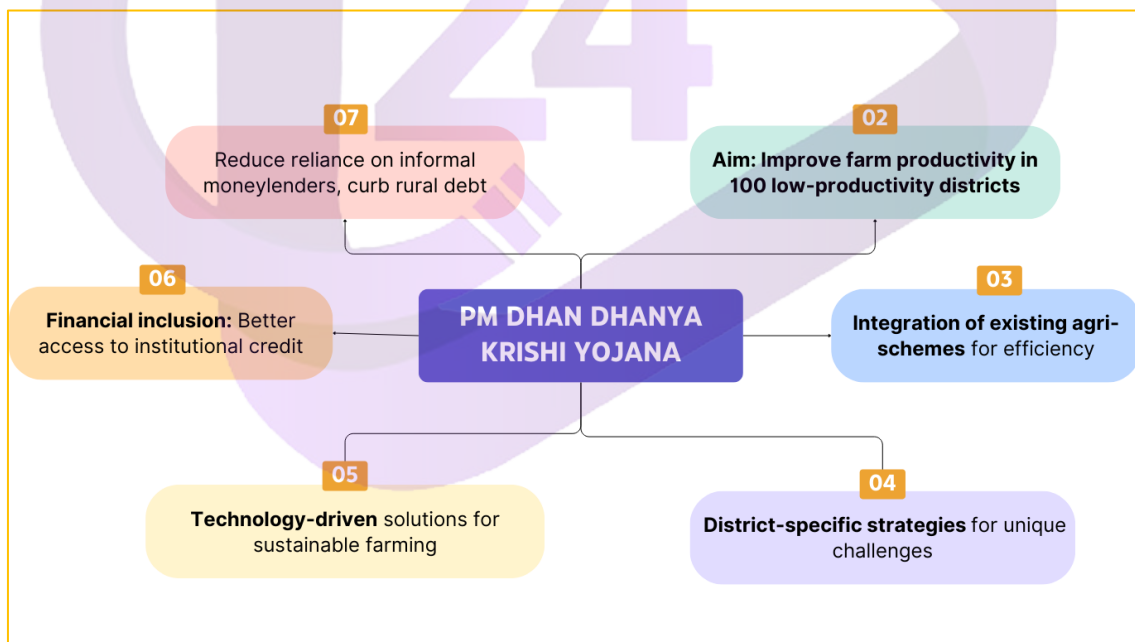
### **Akashvani's Har Kanthh Mein Bharat – Celebrating India's Classical Music Heritage:**

- **15-episode classical music series** aired from **Feb 2 to Feb 16, 2025.**
- **Broadcasted from:** 21 Akashvani stations across India.
- **Featured Genres:** Hindustani and Carnatic music.
- **Impact:**
  - Engaged listeners of all ages, promoting classical music appreciation.
  - Reaffirmed Akashvani's role in preserving India's cultural heritage.
  - Received overwhelming audience response, inspiring future cultural initiatives.



### **PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana:**

- **Launch:** Introduced in **Union Budget 2025** by **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman**
- **Objective:** Enhance agricultural productivity in **100 low-productivity districts**



- **Key Goals:**
  - Boost **farm productivity**
  - Increase **credit access**
  - Modernize **farming practices**
- **Beneficiaries:** Expected to benefit **1.7 crore farmers**

- **Inspired By: Aspirational Districts Program**, which improved socio-economic indicators in backward areas
- **Key Features:**
  - **Integration of existing agricultural schemes** for better efficiency
  - **District-specific interventions** for unique agricultural challenges
  - **Technology-driven solutions** to promote **modern & sustainable farming**
  - **Focus on financial inclusion** by improving access to **institutional credit**
  - **Reduce dependence on informal moneylenders** and curb rural indebtedness

### India Tops Global Digital Well-Being Index

- **Rank & Score:** India ranks **1st** in the **Global Digital Well-Being Index** with a score of **67/100**
- **Online Satisfaction:** **58% of Indians** are satisfied with their digital experiences (higher than **US - 53%, UK - 42%**)
- **Parental Support:** India has the **strongest support networks** for youth, with **9-12 sources** of guidance (parents, teachers, mentors)
- **Parental Engagement:** **70% of parents** monitor their teens' online activities (**up from 62% in 2023**)
- **Online Threats:**
  - **71% of Gen Z** users targeted for sextortion, **55% fell victim**
  - **77%** lost control of intimate images, **80% were minors (13-17 years)**
  - **60%** faced grooming, with **over half being minors**
- **Legal Awareness Issues:**
  - **52%** wrongly believe not reporting explicit content of minors is legal (**highest globally**)
  - **36%** think sharing/viewing such content is legal
  - **39%** believe storing such content online is lawful

### Watershed Yatra Launched by Shivraj Singh Chouhan

- **Launch Date & Objective:**
  - **February 4, 2025** – Nationwide **"Watershed Yatra"** launched under **WDC-PMKSY 2.0**
  - Aim: **Promote soil & water conservation, sustainable watershed management, and public participation**



- **Participation & Scope:**
  - **800+ Gram Panchayats, 1 lakh+ people** participated in the launch
  - Covers **805 projects, 6673 Gram Panchayats (13,587 villages) in 26 States & 2 UTs**
  - Duration: **60-90 days**
- **Key Announcements:**
  - **Public-Private-People Partnership (4Ps) model** for watershed management
  - **Watershed-Janbhagidari Pratiyogita (2025-26): Rs 20 lakh reward** per top project
  - **Rs 70.80 crore allocated** for competition rewards
- **Major Activities:**
  - **Bhoomi Poojan & Lokarpan** – Launch & completion of watershed projects
  - **Watershed Mahotsav & Panchayat** – Community discussions on conservation
  - **Shramdan (voluntary labor) & Bhumi-Jal Pitch** – Involvement in water harvesting projects
  - **Awards & Recognitions** – Honoring watershed contributors
- **Youth & Educational Initiatives:**
  - **Learning Management System (LMS) on Watershed Development** (linked to **MY Bharat** portal)
  - **Certificates** for youth participation in conservation activities
- **Impact & Expected Outcomes:**
  - **Strengthens public participation** in water conservation
  - **Creates trained watershed workers & leaders** for long-term sustainability

## Ross Sea Research & Conservation

- **Geographic Overview**
  - **Location:** Southern Ocean, bordered by Cape Adare & Cape Colbeck
  - **Area:** ~1.55 million sq. km
  - **Depth:** Mostly <900m deep
  - **Accessibility:** One of the **least-iced** Antarctic regions, aiding research
- **Biodiversity & Marine Protection**
  - **Largest emperor penguin colony** globally
  - **Marine Protected Area (MPA): Fishing prohibited** to conserve ecosystems
  - **Environmental DNA studies:** Tracking **zooplankton & fish distribution**
  - **Climate Change & Global Impact**
    - Acts as a **natural climate lab**, crucial for studying **sea ice formation**
    - Influences **global ocean currents & heat distribution**

- Research aids in predicting **future climate scenarios**

- **Historical Exploration**

- First explored by **HMS Erebus & HMS Terror (1841)**
- Ongoing **geological & ecological studies** enhance Antarctic understanding
- **Conservation & Regulatory Framework**
- **CCAMLR (1980)**: Oversees marine life & environmental protection
- **Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP)**: Tracks human impact (fishing, harvesting)

### India's First White Tiger Breeding Centre

- **Approval & Location**

- **Approved by**: Central Zoo Authority (CZA)
- **Location**: Govindgarh, Rewa district, Madhya Pradesh
- **Nearby Facility**: Mukundpur White Tiger Safari (10 km away)

- **Historical Significance**

- Rewa is home to **Mohan**, the last known wild white tiger (discovered in 1951)
- Maharaja Martand Singh Judeo initiated **white tiger breeding** efforts

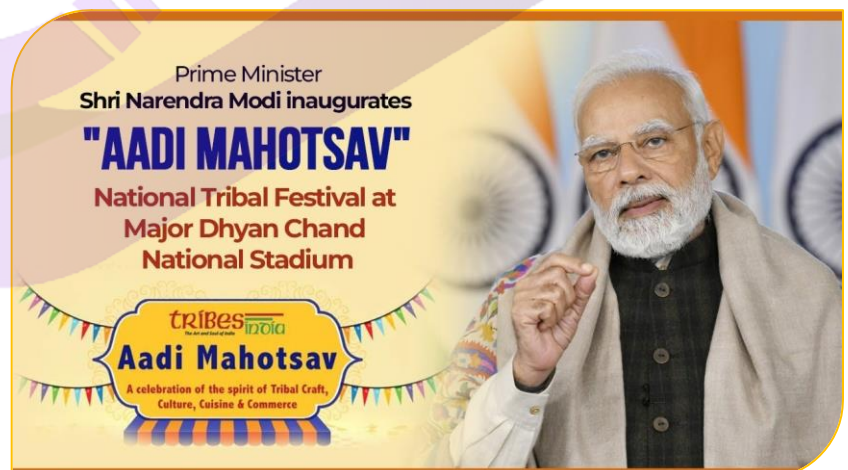
- **Objectives & Impact**

- **Biodiversity conservation** & white tiger population revival
- **Boosts wildlife tourism** and generates **local employment**
- **Part of revised master plan** for Mukundpur White Tiger Safari & Zoo

### Aadi Mahotsav 2025

- **Event Overview**

- **Inaugurated by**:  
President **Droupadi Murmu**
- **Date & Venue**: February 16-24, 2025, **Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, New Delhi**
- **Organized by**: **TRIFED**  
under the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**



- **Objective**: Celebration of **tribal heritage, culture, arts, crafts, cuisine, and commerce**

- **Key Highlights**

- **600+ tribal artisans** from **30+ States/UTs**
- **500 performing artists**, showcasing **Chhau, Kalbelia, Gaur Mariya, Siddhi Dhamal, Angi Ger** dances



- **25 tribal food stalls** featuring indigenous cuisines
- **Live painting sessions & artisan interactions**
- **Government Initiatives for Tribal Welfare**
  - **PM-JANMAN Abhiyan (2023):** ₹24,000 crore for doorstep delivery of essential services to PVTGs
  - **Dharti Aba Janjati Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (2024):** ₹80,000 crore for **tribal villages'** development
    - **Connecting 63,000 villages to roads & mobile networks**
    - **Permanent housing & welfare schemes** for tribal citizens
- **Economic & Cultural Impact**
  - **Strengthening livelihoods** by connecting artisans to national & global markets
  - **Republic Day 2025 Best Tableau Award** by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs on display
  - **Collaboration with 20 PSUs & 35 training institutes**
  - **Signing of 25+ MoUs** (corporate tie-ups, e-commerce, value addition to tribal products)
  - **Delegations from Sri Lanka & Indonesia**
- **Aadi Mahotsav – A Movement for Tribal Empowerment**
  - Promotes **economic self-reliance, cultural preservation, & social empowerment**
  - Bridges **tradition with modernity**, ensuring **global recognition for tribal contributions**

## **SOUL Leadership Conclave 2025**

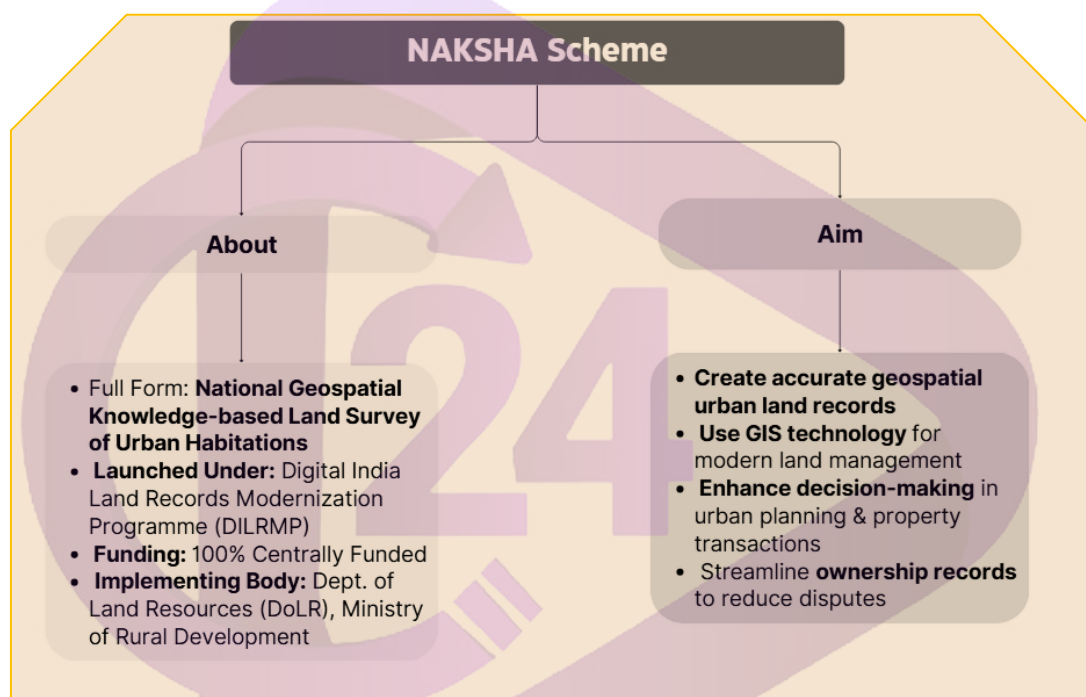
- **Event Overview**
  - **Inaugurated by:** PM Narendra Modi on **21st February 2025**
  - **Venue:** Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
  - **Keynote Speaker:** PM of Bhutan, **Dasho Tshering Tobgay** (Guest of Honor)
  - **Dates:** 21st – 22nd February 2025
  - **Objective:** **Fostering leadership insights & collaboration** across various domains
- **About the Conclave**
  - **Brings together leaders** from **politics, sports, arts, media, spirituality, public policy, business, and the social sector**
  - **Discussions on leadership**, sharing life journeys, failures, and successes
  - **Aims to inspire young minds** and **broaden the landscape of political leadership**
  - **About SOUL (School of Ultimate Leadership)**
  - **An upcoming leadership institution in Gujarat**
  - **Focus:** Enabling **authentic leaders** to serve the **public good**
- **Objective:**

- **Formal leadership training** beyond political lineage
- **Merit-based leadership development**
- **Skills & expertise** to navigate modern leadership challenges

## NAKSHA Scheme

### • What is the NAKSHA Scheme?

- **Full Form:** National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations
- **Launched Under:** Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)
- **Funding:** 100% Centrally Funded
- **Implementing Body:** Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development



### • Objectives

- Create a comprehensive and accurate geospatial database for urban land records.
- Modernize land management using GIS technology.
- Improve decision-making in urban planning, land use, and property transactions.
- Streamline property ownership records to reduce disputes.

### • Implementation

- The scheme has been implemented across **152 urban local bodies in 26 states**.
- **Selection Criteria** for cities:
  - Area less than **35 sq km**
  - Population less than **2 lakh**

### • Expected Benefits

- Digitized and accurate urban land records.

- Faster and more efficient urban planning.
- Reduction in land disputes.
- Improved property tax collection for urban local bodies.
- Simplified property transactions and better credit access for property owners.

### Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM)

- **Context:** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched the Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM) to harmonize the government’s digital presence.
- **About DBIM**
  - DBIM aims to revolutionize India’s digital governance by establishing a consistent, secure, and inclusive digital identity across government platforms.
- **Objectives of DBIM**
  - Aligns with the Prime Minister’s vision of “Reform, Perform, and Transform.”
  - Enhances citizen-centric digital governance.
  - Simplifies and standardizes government websites and services for accessibility and inclusivity.
  - Strengthens the “Minimum Government, Maximum Governance” approach with Uniform Governance.
- **Key Features of DBIM**
  - DBIM Toolkit – Ensures uniformity in digital identity across government platforms.
  - Gov.In CMS – Streamlined website management system for government websites.
  - Central Content Publishing System (CCPS) – Centralized content governance for consistent messaging.
  - Social Media Guidelines – Standardized digital communication for ministries and departments

### Bharat Calling Conference 2025

- **Event:** ‘Bharat Calling Conference 2025’ inaugurated by **Union Minister for Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal** in Mumbai.
- **Organized by:** IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- **Theme:** *Path to Viksit Bharat 2047: Pioneering Prosperity for All.*
- **Focus:** India's economic growth, investment opportunities, and business-friendly policies.
- **Five Key Enablers for Viksit Bharat@2047:**
  - **Quality Management & Handholding of Small Businesses**
  - **Sustainability**
  - **Inclusive Growth**
  - **Skill Development**

- **Competitiveness & Efficiency**
- **Quality Revolution:**
  - Need for modern quality standards & good manufacturing practices.
  - 700+ quality control orders in India.
  - Big businesses should support small businesses in quality control.
- **Sustainability & Inclusive Growth:**
  - Sustainability is key in trade and commerce.
  - Government is focused on *ease of living & infrastructure development*.
  - Businesses should promote inclusive growth through CSR.
- **Skill Development:**
  - Two new **skill development centres** coming up in North Mumbai.
  - Focus on job creation & strengthening the economy.
- **Competitiveness & Efficiency:**
  - Industries must build **innovation & efficiency** rather than rely on government subsidies.
  - Stronger **manufacturing practices, skillsets, and competitiveness** needed for global engagement.

#### **'One Nation, One Port' Initiative**

- **Event:** Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Minister **Sarbananda Sonowal** launched major maritime initiatives.
- **Purpose:** Modernizing India's **maritime infrastructure**, boosting **global trade**, and promoting **sustainability**.
- **Occasion:** Stakeholders' meeting to discuss maritime sector announcements from **Union Budget 2025-26**.
- **Major Announcements**
- **One Nation: One Port Process (ONOP)**
  - **Objective:** Standardizing and streamlining port operations across India.
  - **Benefits:**
    - Reduces **inconsistencies in documentation & processes**.
    - Lowers **costs and operational delays**.
    - Enhances **efficiency and competitiveness** of Indian ports.
- **Sagar Ankalan – Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) 2023-24**
  - **Aim:** Measuring and improving port efficiency.
  - **Impact:** Boosts India's **global maritime competitiveness**.
- **Bharat Global Ports Consortium**
  - **Purpose:** Expanding **India's maritime trade reach**.

- **Impact:** Strengthens India's **global trade partnerships**

## **Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme**

### **• Introduction**

- **Launched in 1998** to provide **timely and adequate credit** to farmers.
- Initially covered **cultivation needs**, later extended in **2004** to **allied and non-farm activities**.
- **Extended in 2018-19** to **fisheries & animal husbandry farmers**.

### **• Implementing Agencies**

- **Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Cooperatives.**

### **• Features**

- **RuPay ATM-enabled debit card** for easy transactions.
- **One-time documentation** with **built-in cost escalation** in credit limits.
- **Aadhaar linkage mandatory** for interest subvention eligibility.
- **No processing fee** for loans under KCC.
- **Collateral-free loan limit raised** from ₹1 lakh to **₹1.6 lakh**.
- Covers **short-term credit** for fisheries, poultry, livestock, and aquaculture needs.

### **• Objectives**

- **Short-term credit** for crop cultivation.
- **Post-harvest & marketing expenses.**
- **Household consumption needs.**
- **Working capital** for farm asset maintenance & allied activities.
- **Investment credit** for agriculture & allied sectors.

### **• Financial Provisions**

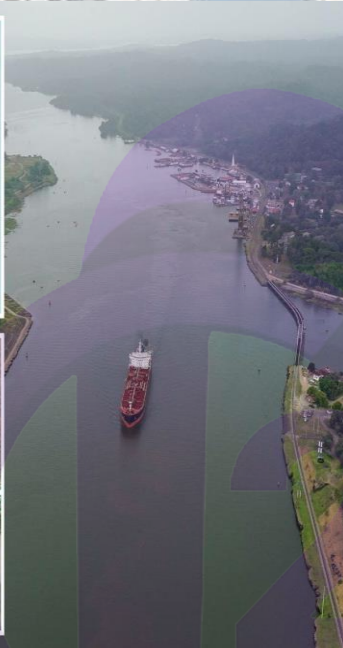
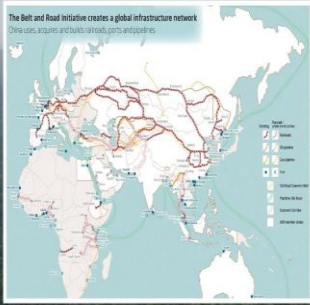
- **Interest subvention of 2%** for **short-term crop loans up to ₹3 lakh**.
- **Additional 3% prompt repayment incentive**, reducing effective interest to **4%**

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# International

## Chapter 8



## Topics in Focus

- **Panama exits China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).**
- **Philippines declares food security emergency** to curb rising rice prices.
- **Niger declared free from onchocerciasis.**
- **Switzerland to end bilateral development programs** in Bangladesh, Albania, and Zambia by 2028.
- **India to host BRICS Youth Council Entrepreneurship Meeting** (March 3-7, 2025).
- **Canada imposes 25% tariff on U.S. imports** in retaliation to Trump's tariffs.
- **Benjamin Netanyahu appoints Major General Eyal Zamir** as head of Israeli Defense Forces.
- **India & Oman amend Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement** to enhance cooperation.
- **New Zealand grants legal personhood to Mount Taranaki.**
- **864 km of India-Bangladesh border remains unfenced** due to land and terrain issues.
- **Australia passes hate crime laws** with mandatory sentences for Nazi salutes.
- **China's Chang'e-7 mission to deploy flying robot** at Moon's south pole in 2026.
- **New Arctic Ocean map reveals vast underwater area** twice the size of France.
- **Iran launches 'Martyr Bahman Bagheri' aircraft carrier** with drones and missile systems.
- **India & Egypt to conduct 'Cyclone 2025' military exercise** in Rajasthan (Feb 10-23).
- **India Energy Week (IEW) 2025 held in New Delhi** (Feb 11-14), 2nd largest global energy event.
- **Trump to impose 25% tariff on all steel & aluminum imports.**
- **Ilie Bologan becomes interim President of Romania.**
- **Sinhala translation of Jataka Tales launched in Sri Lanka.**
- **Constantine Tassoulas becomes President of Greece.**
- **Trump announces F-35 Stealth Fighter deal with India.**
- **China to build 2,000m deep marine research facility** in the South China Sea.
- **China plans 'space station' in the South China Sea.**
- **Indian Embassy in Bangkok hosts Khon dance & Sitar recital** under SAMVAD-IV.
- **Google opens fourth campus in Bengaluru.**
- **Jogighopa Inland Waterways Terminal (IWT) to boost trade** between India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.
- **India & Argentina sign MoU on lithium exploration** (Feb 19, 2025).
- **India-Philippines celebrate 75 years of ties** with the Thiruvalluvar statue unveiling.
- **Bangladesh declares Feb 25 as National Military Martyrdom Day.**
- **India sends 26 tons of humanitarian aid to Honduras** after Tropical Storm Sara.
- **China launches ChinaSat-10R satellite** aboard Long March 3B rocket (Feb 22, 2025).
- **Trump plans \$5 million 'Gold Cards' for U.S. citizenship.**

- Blue Origin's "Perfect 10" mission launches six space tourists.
- Japan's birth rate hits historic low (720,998 births in 2024, a 5% decline)

## Panama Withdraws from China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

### Key Highlights

- **Panama exits BRI:** President **Jose Raul Mulino** announced **Panama's withdrawal** from China's **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.
- **Official notice to China:** Panama's **embassy in Beijing** has given a **90-day withdrawal notice**.
- **US Pressure:** Decision follows **US concerns over Chinese influence** in the **Panama Canal**.
- **Panama Canal Dispute:**
  - **US falsely claimed** that Panama granted **free passage** to US government vessels.
  - **Panama Canal Authority denied** making any tariff adjustments.
  - **Trump and US officials concerned** over **Chinese investments** in the canal.
- **First Latin American country** to withdraw from the **BRI**, which **operates in over 100 countries**.

## Niger Becomes First African Nation to Eliminate Onchocerciasis

- **WHO Announcement:** On **January 30, 2025**, **Niger** became the **first African country** to eliminate **onchocerciasis (river blindness)** as a public health threat.
- **Global Recognition:** Niger joins **Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Mexico** in eliminating the disease.
- **Onchocerciasis Overview:**
  - Caused by **parasitic worms** transmitted through **blackfly bites**.
  - Leads to **intense itching, skin damage, and blindness**.
  - One of the **leading causes of infectious blindness** in the world.
- **How Niger Achieved This Feat:**
  - **Started in 1976:** Joined **WHO's Onchocerciasis Control Programme (OCP)**.
  - **Aerial insecticide spraying** to reduce blackfly populations.
  - **1995 shift to community-driven Ivermectin treatment** under the **African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control (APOC)**.
  - **Merck & Co. donated Ivermectin** for mass drug administration.
  - **Dramatic reduction in prevalence:** From **60% to 0.02% by 2014**.
- **Public Health Impact:**
  - Sets an **example for other African nations** fighting neglected tropical diseases.
  - Proves that **long-term, sustained efforts** can eliminate major public health threats.
  - Highlights **WHO's role and global cooperation** in disease eradication.

## India Braces for Impact as US Imposes 25% Steel Tariff

- **Trump's Announcement:**



- 25% tariff on **all foreign steel and aluminium imports**, including from allies.
- Possible **reciprocal tariffs** to follow.
- Part of a broader strategy against **China, Europe, and other trade partners**.
- **Immediate Market Reaction in India:**
  - **Nifty Metal Index** fell **3%**.
  - **Tata Steel, JSW Steel** saw **4% decline**.
  - Concerns over **export competitiveness** and revenue impact.
- **India's Steel Industry Concerns**
  - **Reduced Access to US Market:**
    - Lower exports could **increase domestic supply**, leading to **falling steel prices**.
    - **2018 tariffs** led to **steel dumping in India**, causing **significant losses**.
    - Potential rise in **cheap Chinese steel imports**.
  - **Global Overcapacity & Dumping Risks:**
    - China, Japan, and South Korea **produce more steel than they consume**.
    - Chinese steel exports **flooding global markets**, impacting **Indian producers**.
    - **Possible trade diversions** towards India, increasing competition.
  - **Indian Steel Exports & Market Exposure:**
    - **India's steel exports to the US (2024): \$450 million**.
    - **Aluminium exports: \$820 million**.
    - **Steel pipes & tubes exports minimal: \$2.83 million**.
    - **India less affected** than Canada, Brazil, and Mexico.
- **Government & Industry Response**
  - **Possible Countermeasures:**
    - **Higher import duties (7.5% → 15%)** to **protect domestic industry**.
    - **Production-linked incentives (PLI) for steel** under consideration.
    - **Ministry of Commerce launches safeguard duty investigation** to prevent steel dumping.
  - **Potential Retaliation from Other Countries:**
    - **China, South Korea, Japan, and the EU** may impose **countertariffs**.
    - **EU retaliated against similar US tariffs in 2018** with duties on American goods.
- **Broader Economic Impact**
  - **Rupee under pressure:**
    - **Market uncertainty** and potential **trade disruptions** may weaken the Indian currency.

- Volatility expected in **forex markets** in the coming weeks.

## India Sends 26 Tons of Humanitarian Aid to Honduras After Tropical Storm SARA

### • Key Highlights:

- **India dispatched 26 tons of humanitarian aid** (food, medical supplies, relief materials).
- **Tropical Storm SARA** caused **flooding, landslides, and severe infrastructure damage** in Honduras.
- Thousands displaced; major agricultural and economic losses.



### • About Honduras:

- **Location:** Central America
- **Capital:** Tegucigalpa
- **Borders:** Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua
- **Geography:**
  - **75% mountainous**, limiting arable land.
  - **Sula Valley (Northwest):** Highly populated, fertile land.
  - **La Mosquitia (Northeast):** Home to **Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve** (UNESCO site).
  - **Coco River** forms the border with Nicaragua.
- **Major Exports:** Coffee, tropical fruits, sugarcane, textiles, minerals.

### • About Tropical Storm SARA:

- **Origin:** Atlantic Ocean, near Honduras.
- **Landfall:** Near **Nicaraguan-Honduran border**.
- **Impact:**
  - **Heavy rainfall, strong winds** caused **widespread flooding, landslides**.
  - Severe damage to **homes, roads, and agriculture**.
  - Thousands displaced, food shortages reported.

- **India's Humanitarian Assistance:**
  - **26 tons of aid sent** (food, medical kits, shelter materials).
  - Strengthens **India-Honduras diplomatic ties**.
  - Part of **India's global humanitarian relief efforts**.

## Trump Proposes 'Gold Cards' for \$5 Million Citizenship Path

- **Key Highlights:**
  - **Trump plans to introduce a "Trump Gold Card" visa**, replacing the EB-5 investor visa.
  - **Cost:** \$5 million per applicant for a **green card with a path to citizenship**.
  - **Implementation:** Commerce Secretary **Howard Lutnick** announced it would replace **EB-5 visas in two weeks**.
- **Purpose:** Attract **wealthy investors**, boost the economy, and **reduce fraud** seen in the EB-5 program.
- **Comparison with EB-5 Visa:**
  - **EB-5 Visa (Since 1990):**
    - Requires **\$1 million investment** in a business creating **at least 10 U.S. jobs**.
    - **Capped at 8,000 visas** per year.
    - Concerns over **fraud and misuse** of funds.
  - **Gold Card Visa:**
    - **\$5 million minimum investment**.
    - No specific **job creation requirements** mentioned.
    - No official **cap on the number of visas** issued.
- **Global Investor Visa Trends:**
  - **Over 100 countries** offer "golden visas" for wealthy investors, including **UK, Spain, Canada, Australia, and Italy**.
  - Similar programs exist worldwide to **attract foreign capital**.
- **Legislative and Policy Concerns:**
  - **Trump claims congressional approval isn't needed**, but Congress determines **citizenship qualifications**.
  - Unclear if the program will require **legislative backing**.
- **Potential Impact:**
  - **Increase in foreign investment** but **uncertainty over implementation and legal challenges**.
  - Possible **backlash over prioritizing wealth for citizenship**.
  - Could reshape U.S. **immigration and economic policies**.

## Blue Origin's NS-30 'Perfect 10' Mission – Key Highlights

- **Mission Overview**

- **Launch Date & Time:** February 25, 2025 (9:30 PM IST / 11:00 AM EST).
- **Location:** Launch Site One, West Texas.
- **Rocket:** Reusable **New Shepard** rocket (named after Alan Shepard).
- **Duration:** ~10-12 minutes, reaching **100 km (Kármán line)**.
- **Experience:** Crew enjoyed **weightlessness** & Earth's view before parachute landing.

- **Crew & Significance**

- **6-member crew**, including:
  - **Lane Bess:** Returning Blue Origin astronaut.
  - **Jesús Calleja:** Spanish TV personality & adventurer.
  - **Elaine Chia Hyde:** Science & innovation professional.
  - **Dr. Richard Scott:** Physician & scientist.
  - **Tushar Shah:** Indian-origin physicist, 2nd Indian to fly with Blue Origin.
  - **Undisclosed 6th passenger:** Revealed during broadcast.
- **Milestone:** **100th woman in space** celebrated.

- **Significance & Future Goals**

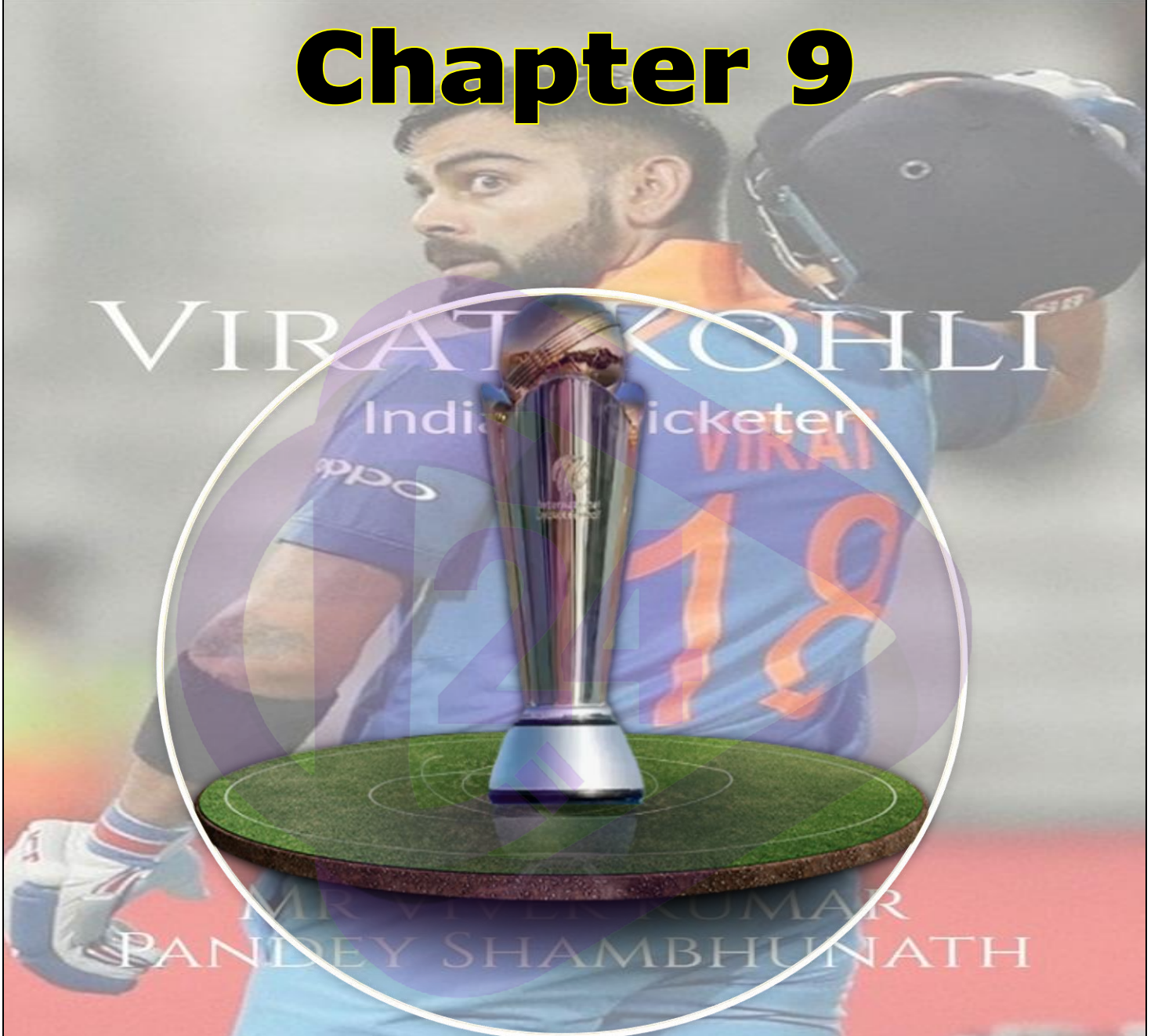
- **New Shepard's 30th flight, 10th with humans.**
- **Blue Origin's strategy:** Expand **suborbital tourism** + develop **orbital & lunar missions**.
- **New Glenn rocket:** Successfully debuted in **January 2025**, targeting **orbital missions**.
- **Future Launches:** Plans for **NS-31 soon**, plus 6-8 New Glenn launches in 2025.

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# Sports

## Chapter 9



## Topics in Focus

- **Viktor Axelsen & An Se-young** win *India Open 2025* men's & women's singles titles.
- **Olivia Gadecki & John Peers** claim *Australian Open mixed doubles* title.
- **GM Iniyam Panneerselvam** wins *Johor International Open Chess Tournament*.
- **Jyothi Yarraji** sets *60m hurdles* national record (8.04s) & wins gold.
- **Michael Clarke** inducted into *Australian Cricket Hall of Fame*.
- **Azmatullah Omarzai** named *ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024*.
- **Alexander Lukashenko** wins *Belarus presidency* for the 7th time.
- **PM Modi** inaugurates *38th National Games* in Uttarakhand, introducing *Yoga & Mallakhamb*.
- **Jasprit Bumrah** wins *Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy* for *ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year 2024*.
- **Dinesh Karthik** becomes *highest run-scoring Indian wicketkeeper in T20 cricket*, surpassing Dhoni.
- **Official logo & mascot** for *23rd National Para Athletics Championship 2025* unveiled.
- **India** wins *ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup* for the 2nd consecutive time.
- **Sachin Tendulkar** honored with *Colonel C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award*.
- **Shrachi Rar Bengal Tigers** win *Hockey India League* title.
- **Tejas Shirse** sets *60m hurdles* national record (7.64s) & wins silver at *Miramas Meet*.
- **GM R. Praggnanandhaa** defeats *World Champion D. Gukesh* to win *Tata Steel Chess 2025*.
- **Bengaluru Jawans** win *first World Pickleball League* title.
- **Uttar Pradesh** wins *Men's Kabaddi* gold at *38th National Games*, defeating Chandigarh.
- **Simona Halep** announces retirement from *professional tennis*.
- **Lovlina Borgohain** wins *gold in women's 75kg boxing* at *38th National Games*.
- **Champions Trophy 2025** official song '*Jeeto Baazi*' released, sung by *Atif Aslam*.
- **Pankaj Advani** wins *Indian Snooker Championship*, securing his *36th national title*.
- **Kyrian Jacquet** wins *Chennai Open 2025* title.
- **Matthew Breetzke** scores *150 runs on ODI debut*, setting a record.
- **Olympic Esports Games 2027** to be held in *Saudi Arabia*.
- **Maharaja Agrasen Institute of Technology** wins *Bronze Medal* in *Global Best M-Governance Award*.
- **Muskan Rana (J&K)** wins *gold in rhythmic gymnastics* at *38th National Games*.
- **Sachin Yadav (Uttar Pradesh)** sets *National Games javelin record* (84.39m) & wins gold.
- **Rajat Patidar** becomes *new captain of RCB*.
- **38th National Games** conclude in *Haldwani, Uttarakhand*.
- **Gulveer Singh** breaks *17-year-old indoor 3000m national record* at *David Hemery Invitational Meet*.

- **ICC Champions Trophy 2025** winners to receive **\$2.24M prize money**.
- **4th South Asian Senior Athletics Championships 2025** to be held in *Ranchi*.
- **Cristiano Ronaldo** tops *2024 Rich List*, earning **\$215M from salary alone**.
- **Manu Bhaker** wins *Sportstar Aces Awards (Female Sportstar & Player of the Year)* for her Olympic achievements.
- **Jacob Kiplimo** sets *fastest half-marathon record* in *Barcelona*.
- **Manu Bhaker** also wins *BBC Sportswoman of the Year Award*.
- **Virat Kohli** becomes *fastest to 14,000 ODI runs*, surpassing *Sachin Tendulkar*.
- **Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prasanth** win *Pune ATP Challenger 100 doubles* title.
- **Gulveer Singh** breaks *13-minute barrier* in *5000m indoor race*, becoming first Indian to do so.
- **Pankaj Advani** wins *14th Asian Snooker Championship* gold in *Doha*.
- **Mohun Bagan Super Giant** wins *ISL League Winners* title, becoming first team to do so consecutively.
- **Saurav Ghosal** wins *Octane Sydney Classic 2025*, marking a comeback after retirement.
- **Army** wins *National Men's Kabaddi Championship*, defeating *Railways* in a thrilling final.
- **Indonesia** wins *first-ever Badminton Asia Mixed Championship* title, defeating *China*.

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# Defense

## Chapter 10

### Exercise Dharma Guardian





## Topics in Focus

- **Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' (6th edition)** will be held from **Feb 24 – Mar 9, 2025**, at **East Fuji Manoeuvre Training Area, Japan**.
- **The 3rd edition of the India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Cyclone'** is being conducted from **February 10 to 23, 2025**, at the **Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan**
- **India-Maldives military exercise 'Ekuverine' (13th edition)** begins in *Maldives*.
- **India & Egypt** conduct '*Cyclone 2025*' joint military exercise (Feb 10-23) in *Rajasthan*, focusing on *counter-terrorism & high-intensity combat*.
- **Indian Navy's Neeraj Kumar** wins *gold in 50m Rifle 3 Positions at 38th National Games (464.1 points)*.
- **HAL's Hindustan Jet Trainer HJT-36** renamed as '**Yashas**'.
- **Indian Army & Air Force** conduct joint *airborne drill 'Exercise Winged Raiders'*.
- **CSIR & NAST** sign *MoU to strengthen India-Nepal scientific cooperation*.
- **Indian Coast Guard** conducts '*Sagar Kavach*' coastal security drill (Feb 21-22, 2025) in *West Bengal*.
- **6th Indo-Japan military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' (Feb 24 – Mar 9, 2025)** held in *Japan* with *India's Madras Regiment & Japan's 34th Infantry Regiment*.
- **INS Guldar** set to become *India's first underwater museum*.
- **DRDO & Indian Navy** successfully test-fire *NASM-SR missile from Seaking 42B helicopter at ITR Chandipur, Odisha*.
- **Indian Navy team in St. Petersburg** prepares for the *launch of stealth frigate Tamala (under construction in Russia), expected in early June*.
- **DRDO & Indian Navy** successfully test *naval anti-ship missile from ITR Chandipur*.
- **CISF** names *Recruits Training Centre (Arakkonam)* after *Chola prince Rajaditya, who fell in Battle of Thakkolam*.

### India-Japan joint military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' 2025:

- **Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' (6th edition)** will be held from **Feb 24 – Mar 9, 2025**, at **East Fuji Manoeuvre Training Area, Japan**.
- **Focus:** *Enhancing interoperability, joint urban warfare, and counter-terrorism operations under the UN mandate*.
- **Participants:**
  - **India:** *120 personnel from the Madras Regiment & other arms/services*.
  - **Japan:** *34th Infantry Regiment of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF)*.
- **Key Drills:**
  - **Tactical drills**, *joint exercises, and disaster response strategies*.
  - **Joint planning & combat skills enhancement**.

- **Significance:** Strengthens **India-Japan defence ties**, regional security, and the **Indo-Pacific vision**.
- **Last edition (2024)** was conducted in **Rajasthan, India**.
- **Other joint exercises between India and Japan:**
  - **Exercise Dharma Guardian** – *Joint Army Exercise*
  - **Exercise JIMEX (Japan-India Maritime Exercise)** – *Bilateral Naval Exercise*
  - **Exercise Shinyuu Maitri** – *Bilateral Air Force Exercise*

### India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Cyclone-III' (2025)

- **Event:** *3rd Edition of Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Cyclone'*
- **Duration:** *February 10 – 23, 2025*
- **Location:** *Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan*
- **Participants:**
  - **India:** *25 personnel from two Special Forces Battalions*
  - **Egypt:** *25 personnel from Special Forces Group & Task Force*
- **Focus Areas:**
  - **Enhancing interoperability** and **military cooperation**
  - **Joint planning** and **tactical drills**
  - **Counter-terrorism operations** in desert/semi-desert terrain
  - **Advanced Special Forces skills & operational tactics**
  - **Display of indigenous military equipment & defence industry overview**
- **Culmination:** *48-hour validation exercise to rehearse counter-terrorism drills*
- **Significance:**
  - Strengthens **India-Egypt defence ties**
  - **Mutual exchange of special operations tactics**
  - Enhances **joint operational capabilities**
  - Builds **camaraderie & bonhomie** between forces
- **Last Edition:** *Conducted in Egypt (January 2024)*
- **Other joint exercises between India and Egypt:**
  - **Exercise X-Eastern Bridge** – *Bilateral Air Force Exercise*
  - **Exercise Triquetra** – *Tri-service Exercise (planned for future cooperation)*



## India-Maldives Military Exercise 'Ekuverin' (2025):

- **Event:** 13th Edition of Joint India-Maldives Military Exercise 'Ekuverin'
- **Duration:** February 2 – 15, 2025
- **Location:** Maafilaafushi, Maldives
- **Participants:** Indian Army & Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)



- **Significance:**

- Strengthens **India-Maldives defence ties**
- Enhances **counter-insurgency** and **disaster relief coordination**
- Reinforces **regional security & cooperation**

- **Key Aspects of the Exercise**

- **Platoon-level participation** from both sides
- Focuses on **tactical drills, joint planning, and operational execution**
- **Counter-insurgency & humanitarian assistance operations**

- **Historical Context**

- **12th Edition:** Held in Chaubatia, Uttarakhand (June 2023)
- **First Edition:** 2009
- **Meaning of 'Ekuverin':** 'Friends' in Dhivehi language

- **Defence Cooperation Between India & Maldives**

- **Comprehensive Action Plan for Defence (2016)**
- **Military hardware assistance & training programs**
- **Multiple joint military exercises**

- **Other India-Maldives Military Exercises**

- **Exercise Katha** (Navy-to-Navy collaboration)
- **Exercise Shield** (Anti-narcotics & maritime search/rescue)
- **Exercise Dosti** (Coast Guard cooperation with Sri Lanka)

- **Strategic Impact**

- Boosts **interoperability & military-to-military relations**
- Reinforces **regional stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**
- Strengthens **trust, camaraderie, and tactical expertise.**

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# Science & Tech

## Chapter 11



## Topics in Focus

- **PUNCH Mission:** NASA's groundbreaking mission to study the Sun's atmosphere and space weather.
- **SPHEREx Space Telescope:** NASA's infrared space telescope set to launch in 2025 to map the universe.
- **NVS-02 Satellite:** ISRO successfully launched the NVS-02 satellite, marking its 100th launch from Sriharikota.

## Medical Innovations

- **Early Alzheimer's Detection:** Dementia Framework invented for early diagnosis.
- **Arthritis Treatment Breakthrough:** INST Mohali develops a self-actuating drug delivery system.
- **Cancer Research Advancement:** IIT Madras launches India's first Cancer Genome Database.
- **LSD Vaccine Approved:** Biovet & ICAR receive CDSCO license for Biolumpivaxin.
- **AI in Surgery:** AIIMS Delhi introduces robotic technology for precision procedures.

## Green & Energy Innovations

- **Hydrogen Fuel Catalyst:** Bengaluru scientists develop high-entropy alloy for green hydrogen production.
- **Sustainable Heating Fabric:** IIT Guwahati creates a self-cleaning, flexible heating fabric for cold climates.

## Space & Defense Advancements

- **Photosynthesis in Space:** China's Shenzhou-19 conducts first artificial photosynthesis experiment.
- **Massive Solid Motor Production:** ISRO & CMTI Bengaluru develop the world's largest 10-tonne 'Vertical Planetary Mixer.'
- **Einstein Ring Discovery:** ESA's Euclid telescope captures a rare cosmic phenomenon.
- **Hypersonic Engine Success:** Hypr Aviation's 'Tejas' engine, tested at IIT Madras, operates at Mach 2-4.
- **Early Space Tech Funding:** In-Space to support commercial space product development.

## Environmental & Wildlife Discovery

- **Rare Bird Breeding Site:** First Blue-Cheeked Bee-eater breeding site in peninsular India found in Kanniyakumari.

## PUNCH Mission

- **Context:** NASA's PUNCH Mission has been in news due to its groundbreaking approach to studying the Sun's atmosphere and space weather.
- **About Polarimetry to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere (PUNCH) mission**
  - It is an advanced solar observation project designed to study the Sun's outer atmosphere, track the origins of solar winds, and analyze Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs).

- It is the first solar mission designed specifically to use polarisation of light to measure the Sun's corona and solar wind in 3D.
- The mission aims to study the Sun's corona and its transition into solar wind using advanced imaging techniques.

- **Objectives**

- To continuously observe and track solar winds and CMEs as they travel through space.
- To improve space weather predictions, helping protect Earth's satellite-based communication, GPS navigation, and power grids from solar disturbances.
- To investigate the forces and energies responsible for accelerating solar winds and CMEs.
- To contribute to better understanding of interplanetary space dynamics by studying how solar materials evolve as they move through the solar system.

- **Mission Design and Instruments**

- PUNCH consists of four identical, suitcase-sized satellites, each weighing approximately 64 kg.
- The mission will deploy three Wide Field Imagers (WFI) and one Narrow Field Imager (NFI) to capture high-resolution images of the Sun's corona.
- Each camera will take polarised images every four minutes and unpolarised images every eight minutes, allowing scientists to create a detailed 3D representation of the solar wind and corona.
- The four satellites will function as a single, virtual instrument, providing continuous, large-scale imagery of the Sun's outer atmosphere.

- **Significance of the PUNCH Mission**

- The mission will provide critical data for understanding solar activity and its effects on space weather, benefiting both Earth and future space exploration missions.
- By offering real-time, high-resolution observations, PUNCH will enhance scientists' ability to predict and mitigate the effects of solar storms.
- Unlike previous solar missions that focused on specific regions, PUNCH will provide a continuous, large-scale view of the corona and heliosphere.

### **SPHEREx Space Telescope**

- **Context:** NASA is preparing to launch its new space telescope, SPHEREx (Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer), on February 28, 2025, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California.
- **About SPHEREx Space Telescope**



- The Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer (SPHEREx) is a NASA space telescope designed to study the origins of the universe and map the entire sky in infrared light.
- Aim: To investigate cosmic inflation, the formation of large-scale structures in the universe, and the distribution of water and organic molecules in interstellar clouds and planetary systems.
- Goal: To map the distribution of water and organic molecules in our Milky Way galaxy, which could provide insights into the origins of life.
- NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is developing SPHEREx, with a planned launch in 2025 aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.
- The telescope will operate in a sun-synchronous orbit around Earth, allowing it to observe the sky continuously.
- SPHEREx will conduct a full-sky survey every six months and is expected to complete four full surveys during its mission.
- The telescope will observe the universe in the near-infrared spectrum, covering wavelengths from 0.75 to 5 microns.
- This capability will help scientists understand the large-scale structure of the cosmos, explore how galaxies and stars formed, and analyze the composition of interstellar material.
- SPHEREx complements other space telescopes like the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), Euclid, and the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope by providing a unique all-sky survey in infrared light.
- Significance: The data from SPHEREx will contribute to dark energy research, help refine models of cosmic evolution, and support the search for habitable planets.

- NVS-02

- **Context:** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has reported a technical glitch in its NVS-02 navigation satellite, launched on January 29, 2025, as part of its 100th successful mission.
- **About NVS-02:**



- NVS-02 is an advanced navigation satellite launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as part of India's Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) system.
- It is designed to enhance India's independent regional navigation capabilities and provide accurate positioning services.
- Launch Vehicle: GSLV-F15 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle)
- Orbit Type: Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO), intended for final positioning in a geostationary orbit

- **Purpose and Objectives**

- NVS-02 is part of ISRO's efforts to build a self-reliant satellite navigation system for India, reducing dependence on global systems like GPS.
- It aims to enhance Position, Velocity, and Timing (PVT) services for civilian and military applications.
- It supports users in India and regions up to 1,500 km beyond the Indian landmass.
- The satellite plays a crucial role in sectors such as transportation, disaster management, precision agriculture, and scientific research.

- **Technical Specifications**

- NVS-02 belongs to the second generation of NavIC satellites, developed to enhance India's regional navigation system.
- The satellite has an approximate weight of 2,232 kg, making it one of the heavier navigation satellites in ISRO's fleet.

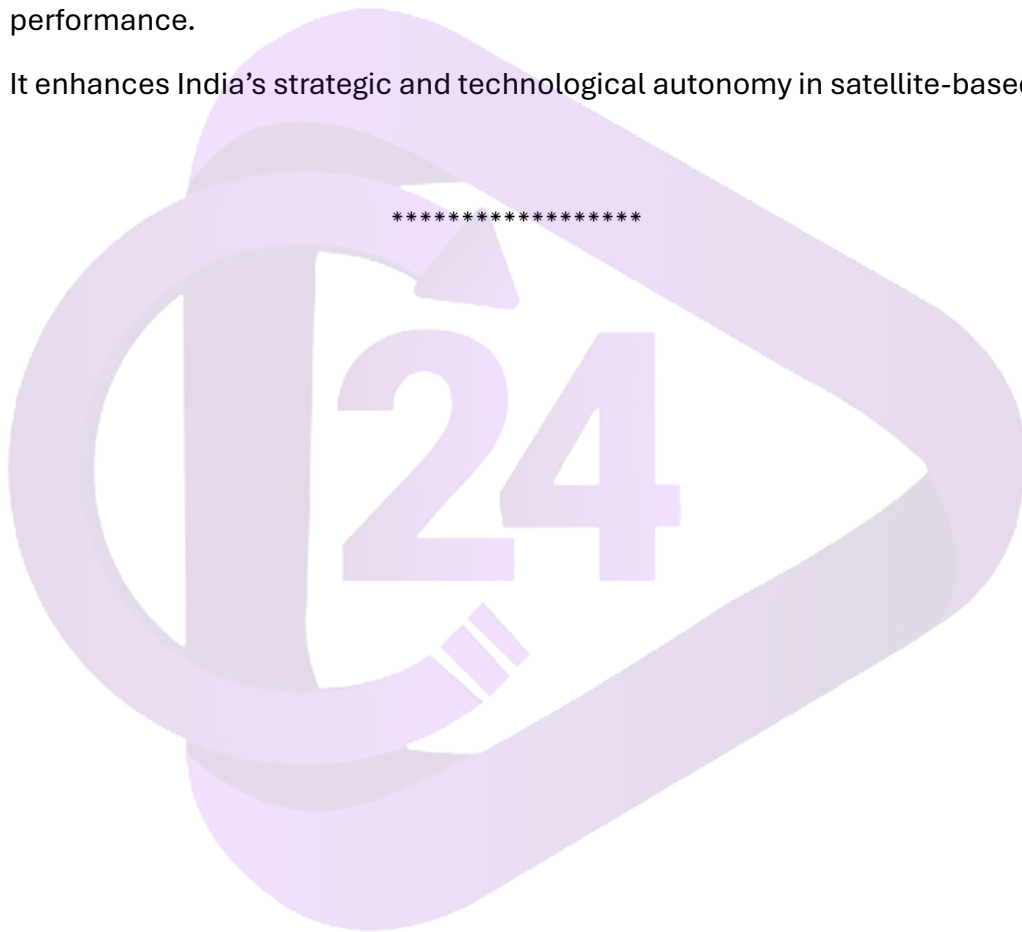


- It carries an advanced navigation payload that supports L1, L5, and S-band signals, ensuring improved accuracy and reliability for users.
- Designed for a mission life of over 12 years, the satellite is expected to provide long-term navigation services.
- One of its key features is the inclusion of a Rubidium Atomic Clock, which significantly enhances timing accuracy for precise positioning applications.

- **Significance of NVS-02 in NavIC System**

- NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is India's independent satellite navigation system, developed for precise location-based services.
- NVS-02 was meant to replace the aging IRNSS-1G satellite and strengthen NavIC's performance.
- It enhances India's strategic and technological autonomy in satellite-based navigation

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# Miscellaneous

## Chapter 12



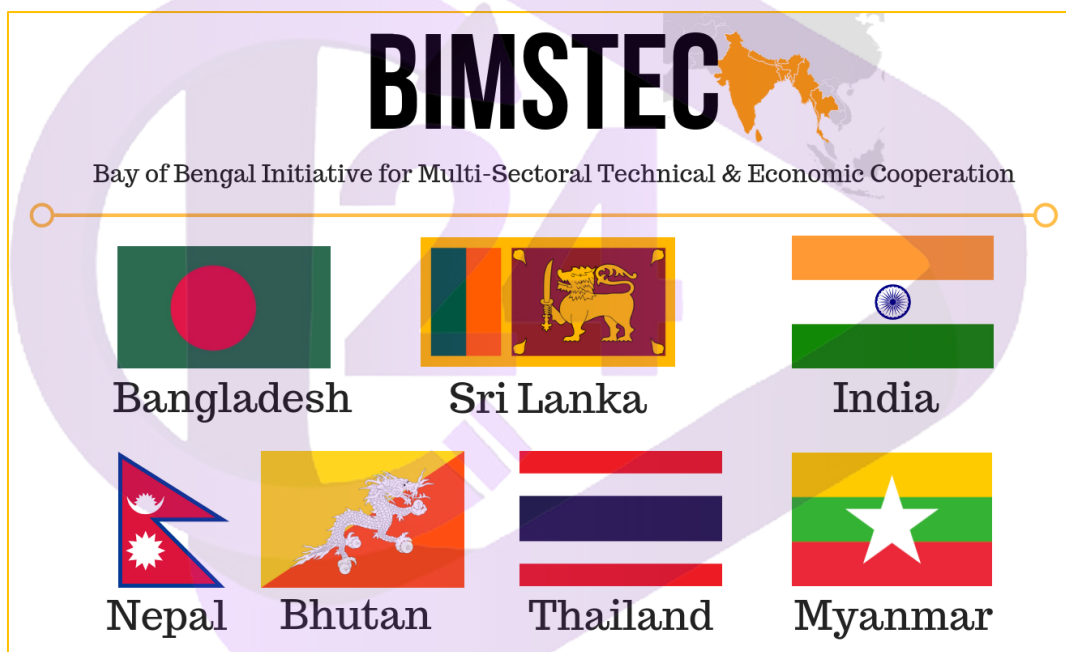
## Topics in Focus

- **Amity University Maharashtra, Mumbai sets a Guinness World Record.**
- **Saraswati Mahotsav** to be celebrated **internationally for the first time in Pehowa on 29th January 2025.**
- **New Delhi World Book Fair 2025** (1-9 February) at **Bharat Habitat Centre, Pragati Maidan**, with the theme '**Republic@75**'.
- **India tops the global list in passenger loads on domestic flights.**
- **India adds 4 new Ramsar sites**, increasing the total to **89.**
- **WHO warns** of an **85% increase in cancer cases and deaths in South-East Asia by 2050.**
- **India sees a 47.3% rise in fruit and vegetable exports** over the past five years.
- **38th Surajkund International Crafts Mela** (7-23 February 2025) in **Faridabad, Haryana**, showcasing **India's cultural heritage.**
- **Henley Passport Index: Singapore has the world's strongest passport**, while **India ranks 80th.**
- **BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025** to be held in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat (7-11 February 2025).**
- **Jil Teichmann wins Mumbai Open 2025**, moving back into the **WTA top 100 rankings.**
- **Mukesh Ambani leads Asia's richest family** with a net worth of **\$90.5 billion** (Bloomberg Report 2025).
- **Campa Cola replaces Thums Up as IPL 2025 co-presenter** with a **₹200 crore deal.**
- **World Travel and Tourism Festival 2025** (14-16 February) held in **New Delhi**, featuring industry leaders and cultural programs.
- **India assumes chairmanship of Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation** at the **13th Governing Council Meeting in Malé, Maldives.**
- **Namita Gokhale launches her 25th book, *Life on Mars: Collected Stories***, at **Belgium Embassy in India.**
- **First International Conference on Carbon Markets, 'Prakriti 2025'**, held in **New Delhi (24-25 February 2025).**
- **World Bank's IFC cancels funding plan for Gujarat's waste-to-energy project.**
- **Singaporean passport ranked strongest in the world with visa-free access to 193 countries** (Henley Passport Index 2025).
- **India ranks 80th**, with **visa-free/visa-on-arrival access to 56 nations.**
- **Henley Passport Index 2025 assessed 199 passports** using IATA data.
- **South Korea & Japan secured 2nd place (190 destinations); Spain, Germany, Italy, France, Ireland, Finland & Denmark shared 3rd rank (187 destinations).**
- **UAE emerged as the biggest gainer**, rising from **32nd (2015) to 8th (2025)**, with **184 destinations.**

- China rose from 94th (2015) to 59th (2025), with access to 83 destinations.
- Biggest losers: Venezuela fell from 2nd (2015) to 44th (2025); US dropped to 9th (183 destinations).
- India shares 80th rank with Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Tajikistan.
- Neighbour rankings: Myanmar (88th), Sri Lanka (91st), Bangladesh (93rd), Nepal (94th), Pakistan (96th).
- Bottom 3 passports: Afghanistan (99th, 25 destinations), Iraq (97th, 30 destinations), Syria (98th, 27 destinations).

### 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit, Gandhinagar (February 7-11, 2025)

- **Objective:** Strengthen regional cooperation among youth in the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Host:** India, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, from February 7-11, 2025.
- **Organizers:** Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Ministry of External Affairs, and CII YI (Knowledge Partner).



- **Inauguration (February 8, 2025):**
  - By **Dr. Mansukh Mandavia** (Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports, India).
  - **Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel** (CM of Gujarat), **MoS Smt. Raksha Khadse**, **Shri Jaideep Mazumdar** (MEA).
- **Theme:** "Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange."
- **Participation:**
  - **70+ youth delegates** from **7 BIMSTEC nations** (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand).
  - Includes **Ministers, MPs, Mayors, entrepreneurs, tech experts, social media influencers, and cultural figures.**

- **Focus Areas:**
  - Entrepreneurship, technology, digital connectivity, cyberspace, sustainable development, and regional cooperation.
- **Significance:**
  - Strengthens India's '**Neighborhood First**', '**Act East**', and '**SAGAR**' policies.
  - Encourages youth participation in **economic, social, and developmental challenges**.
  - Promotes **strategic dialogue, collaboration, and leadership** among young leaders.
  - Enhances **youth engagement** and **regional development** momentum.

### India Assumes Chairmanship of BOBP-IGO – Key Highlights

- **Why in News?**
  - India has taken over the **Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal (BOB) Inter-Governmental Organisation** from **Bangladesh** at the **13th Governing Council Meeting in Malé, Maldives**.
- **What is BOBP-IGO?**
  - A **regional fisheries body** promoting **sustainable fisheries management** and improving **livelihoods of small-scale fishers** in the Bay of Bengal.
  - **Established:** 2003 (**Headquarters:** Chennai)
  - **Evolved from:** Bay of Bengal Programme (BoBP) launched in **1979 under FAO (UN)**.
- **Members:**
  - **Full Members:** Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka
  - **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand
- **Objectives:**
  - Enhance **marine fisheries management**.
  - Build **fisher capacities & policy cooperation**.
  - Combat **Illegal, Unreported & Unregulated (IUU) fishing**.
- **Significance of India's Chairmanship:**
  - Lead **sustainable fisheries policies & marine conservation**.
  - Strengthen **monitoring, surveillance & enforcement** to prevent overfishing.
  - Facilitate **collaboration & tech integration** in fisheries.
  - Promote **scientific research, economic growth & regional influence** in the **Indian Ocean Region**.

### Prakriti 2025: International Conference on Carbon Markets

- **Full Name:** Promoting Resilience, Awareness, Knowledge, and Resources for Integrating Transformational Initiatives.
- **Dates:** February 24-25, 2025.

## What Is The Carbon Market?

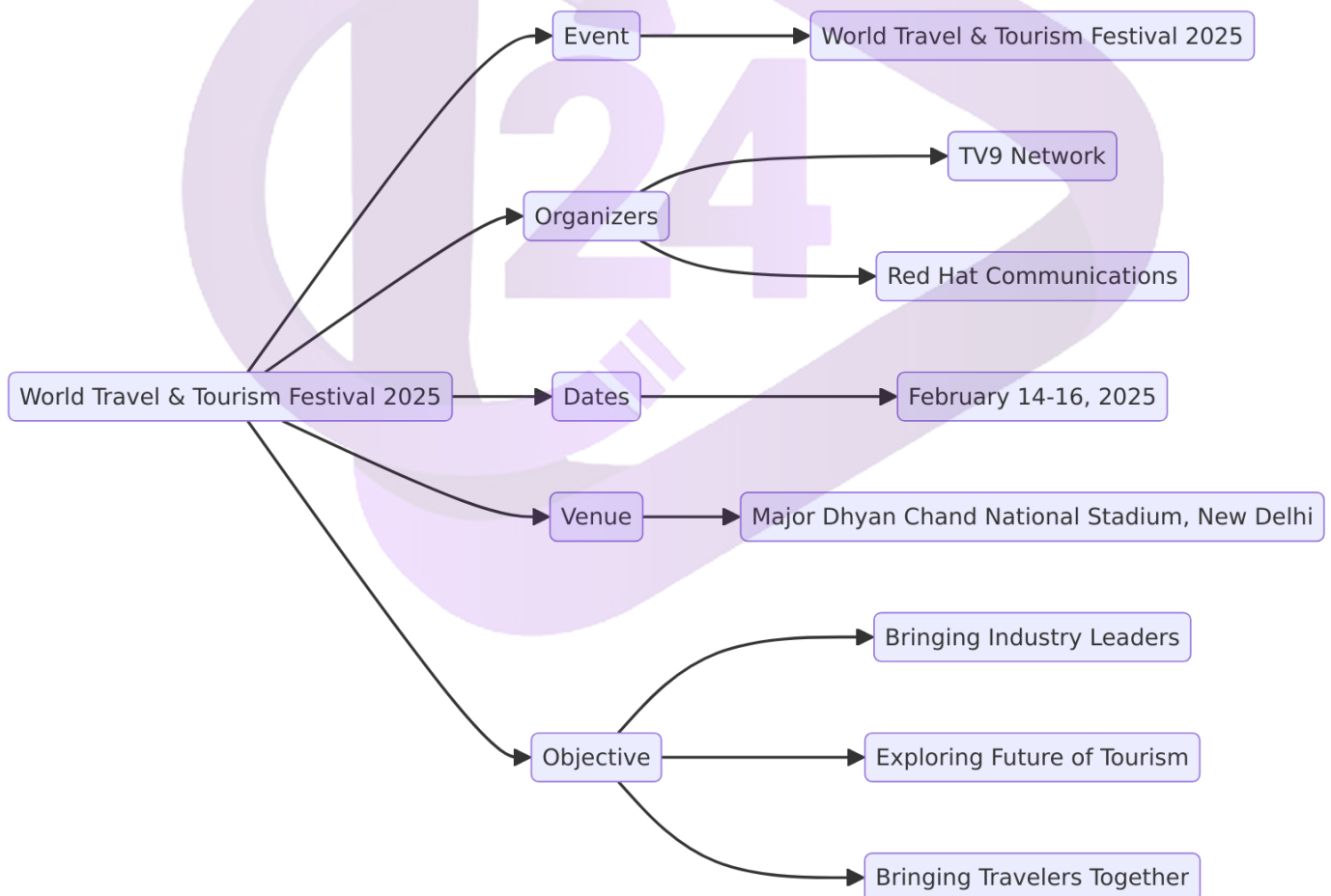


- **Organized by:** Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the **Ministry of Power** and **Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change**.
- **Objective:** Address global carbon market trends, challenges, and future opportunities.
- **Inauguration & Notable Attendees**
  - **Inaugurated by:** Shri Manohar Lal, Minister of Power & Housing and Urban Affairs.
  - **Notable Speaker: Dia Mirza**, UN Goodwill Ambassador & Actor, spoke on sustainability and climate action.
- **Key Experts:**
  - **Thomas Kerr (World Bank):** Stressed on global carbon pricing and India's readiness for shifts like **EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**.
  - **Ashok Lavasa (Former Finance Secretary):** Spoke on governance, transparency, and accountability in climate finance.
- **Major Discussion Topics & Sessions**
  - **Private Sector & Indian Carbon Market (ICM)** – Industry adaptation to global carbon policies.
  - **Governance & Accountability in Climate Finance** – Strong MRV frameworks and fair benefit distribution.
  - **Renewable Energy Incentives through Carbon Markets.**
  - **Price Transparency in Global Carbon Trading.**
  - **Role of Climate Tech Startups in Sustainability.**
  - **Leveraging Finance for Clean Technologies.**
- **Participation & Impact**
  - **80+ experts** and **600+ delegates** from ministries, financial institutions, corporations, and international organizations.
- **Government Participation:** Ministries of **Power, Environment, and Agriculture** played a key role.

- **Outcome:** Strengthened India’s role in carbon markets and climate action, enhancing global collaborations.
- **About Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**
  - **Established:** March 1, 2002, under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001.**
  - **Objective:** Reduce energy intensity in India through **policy development, regulation, and market-driven initiatives.**

**World Travel & Tourism Festival 2025 – Key Highlights**  
**Overview**

- **Event:** World Travel & Tourism Festival 2025
- **Organizers:** TV9 Network & Red Hat Communications
- **Dates:** February 14-16, 2025
- **Venue:** Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, New Delhi
- **Objective:** Bringing together industry leaders, brands, and travelers to explore the future of tourism.



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# State

## Chapter 13



### Schemes





## Topics in Focus

### Governance & Welfare Schemes

- Haryana WCD Minister launched the '**Samman Sanjeevani**' app to monitor scheme benefits.
- Telangana introduced **four welfare schemes** benefiting **6.15 lakh citizens**.
- Odisha implemented five schemes under **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**: "Nirbhaya Kadhi," "Mo Gelha Jiya," "Kalpana Abhiyaan," "Swarna Kalika," and "Veerangana Yojana."
- **Haryana Witness Protection Scheme 2025** launched to safeguard witnesses in criminal cases.
- Assam's **Bodoland Territorial Council** recognized **Bathoism** as an official religion option in applications.

### Infrastructure & Development

- Karnataka Cabinet approved the **Greater Bengaluru Integrated Satellite Town** project in Ramanagara (**8,032 acres**).
- Karnataka signed an **MoU** with the **Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce** at **Invest Karnataka 2025** to boost trade & investment.
- The **West Bengal government** introduced the "**Nodi Bandhan**" scheme to prevent Ganga erosion and improve riverine areas.

### Energy & Environment

- A **1.2 GW solar power park** is being developed in **Solapur, Maharashtra**.
- Gujarat's **Guneri village** declared the **state's first Biodiversity Heritage Site**.
- Kerala became **India's first state** to implement **scientific disposal of expired drugs** under the nGARV initiative.
- **Madhya Pradesh's vulture population** reached **12,981**, marking a record increase.
- The **Saffron reedtail damselfly**, endemic to the Western Ghats, was spotted for the **first time** in Karnataka's **Madhugundi, Chikkamagaluru**.
- Karnataka declared '**Naxal-free**' after the last Maoist surrendered in Chikkamagaluru.

### Sports & Cultural Achievements

- **Odisha Warrior** won the **Women's Hockey India League 2025** title.
- **Indian Oil Corporation** became the **sponsor of the National Games** in Uttarakhand.
- **Madhya Pradesh set a Guinness World Record** as **139 artists danced continuously for 24 hours**.
- **J&K Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha** received the **Maharaja Hari Singh Award**.
- **J&K Police registered its first 'electronic FIR'** after receiving a complaint via WhatsApp.
- **Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin** inaugurated the **Tiruchirappalli Birds Park** in Tamil Nadu.

### Samman Sanjeevani App

- **Launched On:** National Girl Child Day 2025  
**Launched By:** Haryana Cabinet Minister Shruti Choudhry  
**Objective:** Improve efficiency in delivering benefits under 'Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana'
- **App Features & Benefits**
  - Tracks welfare services provided to BPL women & girls (10-45 years)
  - Ensures timely distribution of sanitary napkins via Anganwadi centers & schools
  - Provides real-time data updates on beneficiaries and monthly benefits
- **10th Anniversary of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'**
  - Celebrated with rallies, cultural events & recognition ceremonies
  - Involves schoolgirls, successful women & community groups
  - Focus on empowering women & raising awareness about daughters' importance

### Odisha's Key Initiatives Under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (BBBP) Scheme

#### 1. Nirbhaya Kadhi & Mo Gelha Jhia (Ganjam District)

- **Objective:** Prevent child marriage & combat sex selection and female foeticide
- **Coverage:** 183,933 adolescent girls (11-18 years) in 3,309 villages
- **Impact:**
  - Ganjam declared child marriage-free in 2022
  - 20 child marriages prevented (2019-2024)
  - 450,000 students from 3,614 schools pledged against child marriage
  - Informants of child marriages receive a ₹5,000 reward
  - Ganjam Collector felicitated for proactive measures

#### 2. Kalpana Avijan (Dhenkanal District)

- **Objective:** Track & monitor adolescent girls (10-19 years) to prevent child marriages
- **Impact:**
  - 343 child marriages prevented (2019-2024)
  - 113,515 adolescent girls enrolled
  - 445,000 students took an oath against child marriage
  - Awareness programs conducted in 1,211 villages
  - District administration awarded for child protection efforts

#### 3. Swarna Kalika (Keonjhar District)

- **Objective:** Raise awareness about child marriage's harmful effects
- **Impact:**
  - 2,000+ stakeholders involved
  - ADVIKA app promoted for awareness & intervention

- 50% reduction in child marriages by 2024

#### 4. Veerangana (Deogarh District)

- **Objective:** Boost self-esteem & confidence through martial arts & self-defense training
- **Impact:**
  - 30-day self-defense & martial arts camp for 500 girls (14-19 years)
  - 300 teachers & guardians oriented on girls' legal rights
  - 50 female master trainers trained 6,000 girls in 300 rural schools
  - Recognized with SKOCH Award & institutionalized in schools & colleges

#### Bathouism Officially Recognized in Assam's Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)

- **Key Announcement (February 22, 2025)**

- The **Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)** government made **Bathouism** an official religion option in application forms.
- This marks an important recognition of **Bathouism, the traditional faith of the Bodo people.**



- **What is Bathouism?**

- **Traditional religion of the Bodo people**, Assam's largest plains tribe.
- The name "**Bathou**" comes from the Bodo words:
  - "**Ba**" = Five
  - "**Thou**" = Deep philosophical thought
- Worships **nature and five key elements:**
  - **Bar (Air)**
  - **San (Sun)**
  - **Ha (Earth)**
  - **Or (Fire)**
  - **Okhrang (Sky)**

- **Core Beliefs of Bathouism**

- **Bwrai Bathou** is the **supreme god** of Bathouism.
- **Sijou Plant (Euphorbia splendens)** symbolizes the faith and is planted on an **elevated altar with bamboo fencing.**
- The bamboo posts represent five life stages:

- **Birth**
  - **Marriage/Procreation**
  - **Sorrow**
  - **Happiness**
  - **Death**
- **Who are the Bodos of Assam?**
    - **Largest Scheduled Tribe (ST) group** in Assam, forming **5-6% of the state's population**.
    - Part of the **Bodo-Kachari** ethnic community.
  - **Bodo Political Struggle & Accords**
    - **1967-68**: First organized demand for a separate Bodo state.
    - **1985**: Assam Accord raised hopes for greater autonomy.
    - **1987**: ABSU (All Bodo Students' Union) renewed statehood demand.
    - **1986**: Bodo Security Force (later NDFB) formed as an armed group.
  - **Key Bodo Accords:**
    - **1993 Bodo Accord:**
      - Signed with ABSU.
      - Led to the creation of **Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC)** with limited powers.
    - **2003 Bodo Accord:**
      - Signed with **Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF)**, Indian government & Assam government.
      - Created **Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)** under the **6th Schedule of the Constitution**.

## West Bengal Launches "Nodi Bandhan" Scheme

- **Introduction**
  - **Launched as part of the 2025-26 budget** by the **West Bengal government**.
  - Focuses on **flood prevention, combating natural disasters, and job creation**.
  - A key component of the **Ghatal Masterplan** for flood control in **West Midnapore**.
- **What is Nodi Bandhan?**
  - **"Nodi Bandhan"** translates to **"River Bond"**.
  - Aims to **interconnect rivers and wetlands** for:
    - **Sustainable development** through nature-based solutions.
    - **Diverse livelihood opportunities** for affected communities.
  - Reflects West Bengal's commitment to **environmental sustainability and economic growth**.
- **Objectives of the Scheme**

- **Combat natural disasters** like floods and river erosion.
- **Prevent river erosion**, especially in **Murshidabad and Malda** districts.
- **Enhance job opportunities** through agriculture, fisheries, and small-scale industries.
- **Develop resilient infrastructure** to protect communities from climate change.
- **Financial Allocation & Implementation**
- **₹200 crores** allocated for **immediate implementation**.
- **Total projected cost: ₹1,500 crores** under the **Ghatal Masterplan**.
- **Hydrological models** to be used for planning and execution.
- Infrastructure development and **pilot interventions** to validate solutions.
- **Impact on Local Communities**
  - **Boosts agriculture and pisciculture** through improved irrigation.
  - **Creates job opportunities** in **fishing, farming, and small-scale industries**.
  - **Enhances flood control** and improves the resilience of local economies.

## Kerala Launches "nPROUD" Initiative for Safe Drug Disposal

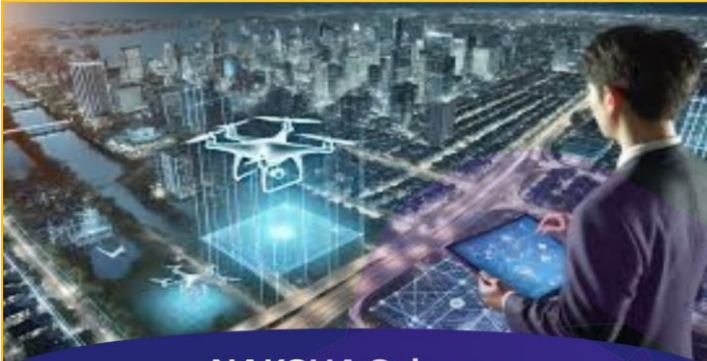
- **Introduction**
  - Kerala's **Drugs Control Department** introduces **nPROUD (New Programme for Removal of Unused Drugs)**.
  - **First government initiative** in India for **safe disposal of expired and unused drugs**.
  - Piloted in **Kozhikode Corporation** and **Ullyeri panchayat**.
- **Why nPROUD?**
  - **Unscientific disposal** of drugs into **waste, soil, and waterbodies** leads to:
    - **Antimicrobial resistance.**
    - **Environmental pollution** by contaminating **groundwater and the food chain.**
  - Previous attempt in **2019** failed due to operational challenges.
- **How Does It Work?**
  - **Two disposal methods:**
    - **Direct collection from homes** in pre-specified months.
    - **Blue-coloured collection boxes** at permanent disposal centers.
  - Implemented with the help of:
    - **Local self-government bodies.**
    - **Green Brigade volunteers.**
  - Safe disposal at **Kerala Enviro Infrastructure Ltd (KEIL)** waste management plant.
- **Future Expansion**
  - The **pilot launch will be evaluated** before scaling up across Kerala.
  - Complies with the **Biomedical Waste Management Act** and environmental regulations.
- **Launch Details**
  - **Health Minister Veena George** to inaugurate nPROUD in **Kozhikode**.
  - A major step towards **public health safety and environmental conservation.**

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# Government Schemes & Programs

## Chapter 14



NAKSHA Scheme



PM **Dhan Dhanya** Krishi Yojana



Wipro Bharat Bill 2023

### GYAN BHARATAM MISSION

- Gyan Bharatam Mission for survey, documentation & conservation of our **Manuscript heritage** will be undertaken
- This mission will cover more than **1 Crore manuscripts**
- National Digital Repository** of Indian knowledge systems will be set up for knowledge sharing



National Manufacturing Mission

### GeM

Government e Marketplace

Government Reimagined

- Inclusive

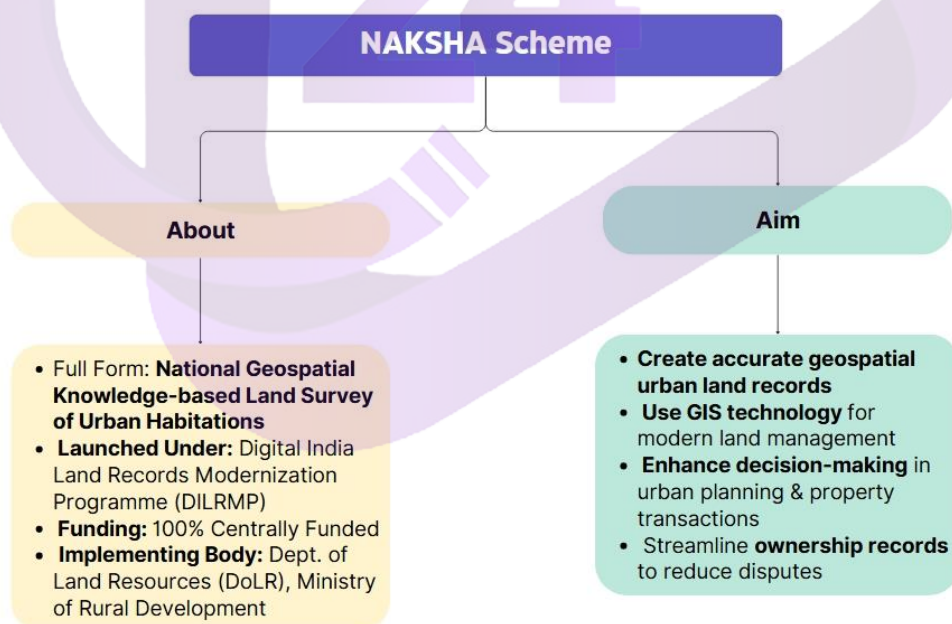
### KISAN CREDIT CARD

## Topics in Focus

1. NAKSHA Scheme
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### NAKSHA Scheme

- **Context:** The NAKSHA scheme, launched by the Union Rural Development has been making headlines due to its ambitious goal of modernizing urban land records.



- **About NAKSHA Scheme**

- The National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) is a new initiative launched under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP). It is a 100% centrally funded scheme.

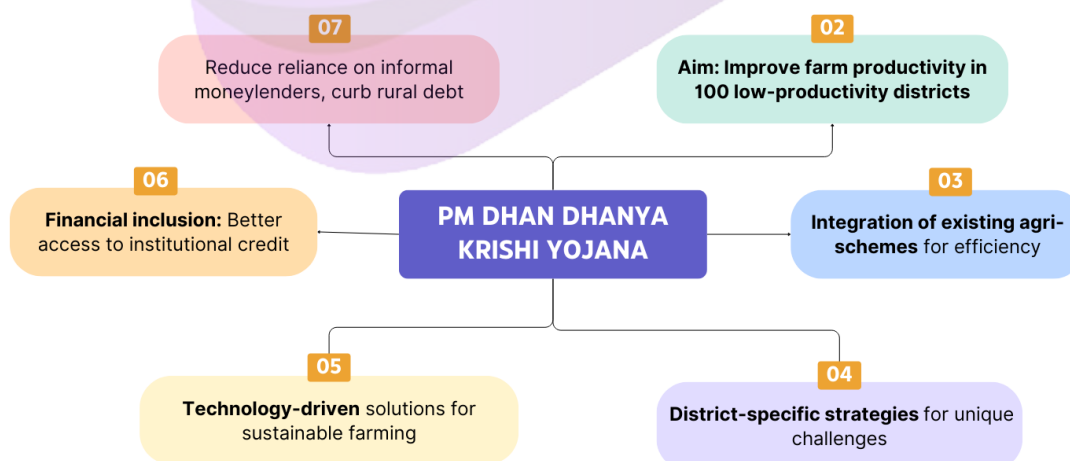
- Aim: It aims to create accurate digital maps of urban areas to streamline land governance, improve property ownership records, and facilitate urban planning.
- Implemented by: Department of Land Resources (DoLR) under the Ministry of Rural Development.

#### • Objective of the Scheme

- Create a comprehensive and accurate geospatial database for urban land records.
- Integrate aerial and field surveys with GIS technology to modernize land management.
- Improve decision-making in urban planning, land use, and property transactions.
- It has been implemented across 152 urban local bodies in 26 states. Selected cities meet two criteria:
  - Area less than 35 sq km
  - Population less than 2 lakh
  - Expected Benefits of NAKSHA
    - Digitized, accurate urban land records.
    - Faster and more efficient urban planning.
    - Reduction in land disputes.
    - Improved property tax collection for urban local bodies.
    - Simplified property transactions and better credit access for owners.

#### PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana

- **Context:** Recently, the Union Government has introduced the PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana which aims at enhancing agricultural productivity.



#### • About the Scheme



- The PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana was launched under Union Budget 2025 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to improve agricultural conditions in 100 low-productivity districts across India.
- The scheme aims to enhance rural prosperity by implementing specialized interventions and integrating existing agricultural schemes.
- It focuses on boosting farm productivity, increasing credit access, and modernizing farming practices.
- The program is expected to benefit 1.7 crore farmers across the identified districts.
- The scheme draws inspiration from the Aspirational Districts Program, which has successfully improved socio-economic indicators in backward regions.

- **Key Features of the Scheme**

- The scheme aims to bring together multiple existing agricultural schemes under one umbrella for better efficiency and impact.
- It will introduce specialized interventions that cater to the unique challenges faced by each of the 100 identified districts.
- The government will leverage technology-driven solutions to help farmers adopt modern and sustainable agricultural practices.
- The scheme specifically targets districts with moderate crop intensity, low productivity, and limited access to institutional credit.
- It aims to encourage financial inclusion by strengthening farmer access to government-backed financial programs and microfinance institutions.
- By promoting formal credit channels, the scheme seeks to reduce farmers' reliance on informal moneylenders and prevent rural indebtedness.

### **Samman Sanjeevani App Launched by Haryana Government**

- **Launched On:** National Girl Child Day 2025  
**Launched By:** Haryana Cabinet Minister Shruti Choudhry  
**Objective:** Improve efficiency in delivering benefits under 'Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana'
- **App Features & Benefits**
  - Tracks welfare services provided to BPL women & girls (10-45 years)
  - Ensures timely distribution of sanitary napkins via Anganwadi centers & schools
  - Provides real-time data updates on beneficiaries and monthly benefits
- **10th Anniversary of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'**
  - Celebrated with rallies, cultural events & recognition ceremonies
  - Involves schoolgirls, successful women & community groups

- Focus on empowering women & raising awareness about daughters' importance

## Odisha's Key Initiatives Under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (BBBP) Scheme

### 1. Nirbhaya Kadhi & Mo Gelha Jhia (Ganjam District)

- **Objective:** Prevent child marriage & combat sex selection and female foeticide
- **Coverage:** 183,933 adolescent girls (11-18 years) in 3,309 villages
- **Impact:**
  - Ganjam declared child marriage-free in 2022
  - 20 child marriages prevented (2019-2024)
  - 450,000 students from 3,614 schools pledged against child marriage
  - Informants of child marriages receive a ₹5,000 reward
  - Ganjam Collector felicitated for proactive measures

### 2. Kalpana Avijan (Dhenkanal District)

- **Objective:** Track & monitor adolescent girls (10-19 years) to prevent child marriages
- **Impact:**
  - 343 child marriages prevented (2019-2024)
  - 113,515 adolescent girls enrolled
  - 445,000 students took an oath against child marriage
  - Awareness programs conducted in 1,211 villages
  - District administration awarded for child protection efforts

### 3. Swarna Kalika (Keonjhar District)

- **Objective:** Raise awareness about child marriage's harmful effects
- **Impact:**
  - 2,000+ stakeholders involved
  - ADVIKA app promoted for awareness & intervention
  - 50% reduction in child marriages by 2024

### 4. Veerangana (Deogarh District)

- **Objective:** Boost self-esteem & confidence through martial arts & self-defense training
- **Impact:**
  - 30-day self-defense & martial arts camp for 500 girls (14-19 years)
  - 300 teachers & guardians oriented on girls' legal rights
  - 50 female master trainers trained 6,000 girls in 300 rural schools
  - Recognized with SKOCH Award & institutionalized in schools & colleges

## National Manufacturing Mission

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2025-26 has introduced significant initiatives to strengthen India's manufacturing sector under the "National Manufacturing Mission".

# NATIONAL MANUFACTURING POLICY (NMP)

TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION AND  
DEVELOPMENT FUND (TADF)

FOR CLEAN, GREEN AND ENERGY  
EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGIES, BY  
MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM  
ENTERPRISES (MSMES).



- **About National Manufacturing Mission**

- The National Manufacturing Mission has been introduced in the Union Budget 2025-26 to boost the manufacturing sector across small, medium, and large industries, further advancing the Make in India initiative.
- Aim: This mission aims to provide comprehensive policy support, execution roadmaps, and a governance framework for central ministries and states.
- A significant component of the National Manufacturing Mission is its focus on Clean Tech manufacturing.
- The initiative aims to enhance domestic value addition and develop an ecosystem for: Solar PV cells, EV batteries, motors, and controllers, Electrolyzers, Wind turbines, High-voltage transmission equipment and Grid-scale batteries.
- By investing in these technologies, the mission seeks to position India as a leader in clean and sustainable manufacturing.

- **Key Focus Areas of the Mission**

- The mission will prioritize five key areas to drive industrial growth and enhance India's global competitiveness:
  - Ease and Cost of Doing Business – Reducing bureaucratic hurdles and making operations more cost-effective for industries.
  - Future-Ready Workforce – Preparing a skilled workforce to meet the demands of emerging industries.

- Dynamic MSME Sector – Strengthening Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to foster innovation and economic resilience.
- Availability of Advanced Technology – Encouraging technological development and adoption to boost production efficiency.
- Quality Products – Promoting high-standard manufacturing to ensure global competitiveness.

### Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM)

- **Context:** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched the Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM) to harmonize the government’s digital presence.
- **About DBIM**
  - DBIM aims to revolutionize India’s digital governance by establishing a consistent, secure, and inclusive digital identity across government platforms.
- **Objectives of DBIM**
  - Aligns with the Prime Minister’s vision of “Reform, Perform, and Transform.”
  - Enhances citizen-centric digital governance.
  - Simplifies and standardizes government websites and services for accessibility and inclusivity.
  - Strengthens the “Minimum Government, Maximum Governance” approach with Uniform Governance.
- **Key Features of DBIM**
  - DBIM Toolkit – Ensures uniformity in digital identity across government platforms.
  - Gov.In CMS – Streamlined website management system for government websites.
  - Central Content Publishing System (CCPS) – Centralized content governance for consistent messaging.
  - Social Media Guidelines – Standardized digital communication for ministries and departments

### SWAYATT Initiative

- **Context:** Recently, the Government e Marketplace (GeM) celebrated six years of the Startups, Women & Youth Advantage through eTransactions (SWAYATT) initiative at its headquarters in New Delhi.
- **About SWAYATT Initiative**
  - It was *launched in 2019 to enhance the market access for women entrepreneurs, youth, startups, Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs), and Self-Help Groups (SHGs).*

- SWAYATT embodies GeM's commitment to social inclusion, fostering economic empowerment, and democratizing access to government procurement opportunities
- This initiative was launched to enhance the participation of startups, women entrepreneurs, and youth in government procurement.

**SWAYATT**

**Why in News?**

Recently, the **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** commemorates the success of **"SWAYATT"**.



Efficient • Transparent • Inclusive

**About Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage Through eTransactions (SWAYATT):**

- It was first launched in **February 2019**.
- **Aim** : To support **start-ups, women, and youth** advantage through **electronic transactions** on the **government eMarketplace (GeM)**.
- The intent of SWAYATT 2019 was :
  - To promote inclusiveness of various categories of **sellers and service providers on the portal**, by taking **proactive steps** to facilitate their **training and registrations** of such specific category of **manufacturers and sellers**,
  - Develop **women entrepreneurship and encourage participation of MSME sector and Start-ups** in public procurement.

- **Focus Areas:**

- Training & of last-mile sellers.
- Encouraging women's entrepreneurship and participation of small-scale businesses in public procurement.
- Addressing key challenges: "access to market," "access to finance," and "access to value-addition."

- **Key Features of SWAYATT:**

- **"Startup Runway" & "Womaniya"** storefronts for visibility of startups, women entrepreneurs, and youth.
- **MoU with FICCI-FLO:** Partnership to support and empower over 9,500 women entrepreneurs through advocacy and training.
- **Udyam-Verified Sellers:** More than 1,77,786 women-led MSEs registered on GeM, completing orders totaling ₹46,615 crore.

**SwaRail SuperApp launch:**

- **Launch Date:** January 31, 2025 (Beta phase)
- **Purpose:** Single platform for multiple railway services
- **Available On:** Google Play Store & Apple App Store
- **Services Offered:**
  - Ticket bookings (reserved & unreserved)
  - PNR & train inquiries
  - Food ordering

- Platform & parcel bookings
- Complaint lodging (*Rail Madad*)
- **Unique Features:**
  - **Single Sign-On** (for IRCTC RailConnect & UTS users)
  - **Secure login** (m-PIN & biometric)
  - **User-friendly onboarding**
- **Beta Testing:** Open for user feedback before the final launch

### Watershed Yatra Launched by Shivraj Singh Chouhan

- **Launch Date & Objective:**

- **February 4, 2025** – Nationwide "Watershed Yatra" launched under **WDC-PMKSY 2.0**
- **Aim: Promote soil & water conservation, sustainable watershed management, and public participation**



- **Participation & Scope:**

- **800+ Gram Panchayats, 1 lakh+ people** participated in the launch
- Covers **805 projects, 6673 Gram Panchayats (13,587 villages)** in **26 States & 2 UTs**
- Duration: **60-90 days**

- **Key Announcements:**

- **Public-Private-People Partnership (4Ps) model** for watershed management
- **Watershed-Janbhagidari Pratiyogita (2025-26):** Rs **20 lakh reward** per top project
- **Rs 70.80 crore allocated** for competition rewards

- **Major Activities:**

- **Bhoomi Poojan & Lokarpan** – Launch & completion of watershed projects
- **Watershed Mahotsav & Panchayat** – Community discussions on conservation
- **Shramdan (voluntary labor) & Bhumi-Jal Pitch** – Involvement in water harvesting projects
- **Awards & Recognitions** – Honoring watershed contributors

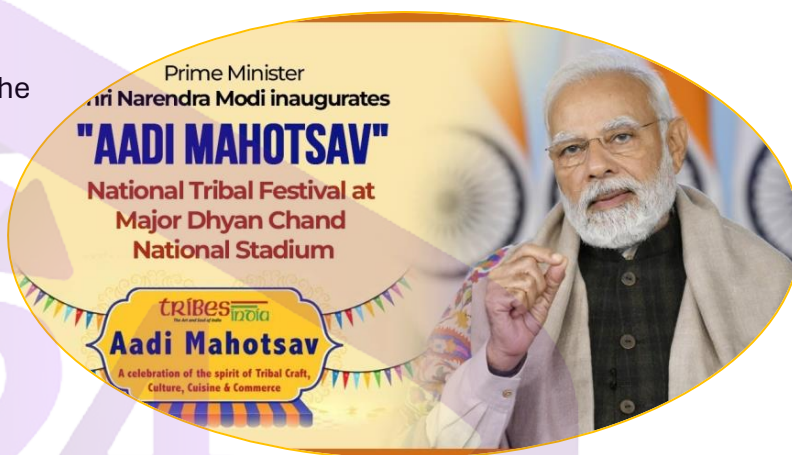
- **Youth & Educational Initiatives:**

- **Learning Management System (LMS) on Watershed Development** (linked to **MY Bharat** portal)
- **Certificates** for youth participation in conservation activities
- **Impact & Expected Outcomes:**
  - **Strengthens public participation** in water conservation
  - **Creates trained watershed workers & leaders** for long-term sustainability

## Aadi Mahotsav 2025

### • Event Overview

- **Inaugurated by:** President **Droupadi Murmu**
- **Date & Venue:** February 16-24, 2025, **Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, New Delhi**
- **Organized by:** TRIFED under the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**
- **Objective:** Celebration of tribal heritage, culture, arts, crafts, cuisine, and commerce



### • Key Highlights

- **600+ tribal artisans** from **30+ States/UTs**
- **500 performing artists**, showcasing **Chhau, Kalbelia, Gaur Mariya, Siddhi Dhamal, Angi Ger** dances
- **25 tribal food stalls** featuring indigenous cuisines
- **Live painting sessions & artisan interactions**

### • Government Initiatives for Tribal Welfare

- **PM-JANMAN Abhiyan (2023):** ₹24,000 crore for doorstep delivery of essential services to **PVTGs**
- **Dharti Aba Janjati Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (2024):** ₹80,000 crore for **tribal villages'** development
  - **Connecting 63,000 villages** to roads & mobile networks
  - **Permanent housing & welfare schemes** for tribal citizens

### • Economic & Cultural Impact

- **Strengthening livelihoods** by connecting artisans to national & global markets
- **Republic Day 2025 Best Tableau Award** by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs on display
- **Collaboration with 20 PSUs & 35 training institutes**
- **Signing of 25+ MoUs** (corporate tie-ups, e-commerce, value addition to tribal products)

➤ **Delegations from Sri Lanka & Indonesia**

• **Aadi Mahotsav – A Movement for Tribal Empowerment**

- Promotes **economic self-reliance, cultural preservation, & social empowerment**
- Bridges **tradition with modernity**, ensuring **global recognition for tribal contributions**

**'One Nation, One Port' Initiative**

- **Event:** Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Minister **Sarbananda Sonowal** launched major maritime initiatives.
- **Purpose:** Modernizing India's **maritime infrastructure**, boosting **global trade**, and promoting **sustainability**.
- **Occasion:** Stakeholders' meeting to discuss maritime sector announcements from **Union Budget 2025-26**.
- **Major Announcements**
- **One Nation: One Port Process (ONOP)**
  - **Objective:** Standardizing and streamlining port operations across India.
  - **Benefits:**
    - Reduces **inconsistencies in documentation & processes**.
    - Lowers **costs and operational delays**.
    - Enhances **efficiency and competitiveness** of Indian ports.
- **Sagar Ankalan – Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) 2023-24**
  - **Aim:** Measuring and improving port efficiency.
  - **Impact:** Boosts India's **global maritime competitiveness**.
- **Bharat Global Ports Consortium**
  - **Purpose:** Expanding **India's maritime trade reach**.
  - **Impact:** Strengthens India's **global trade partnerships**

**Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme**

• **Introduction**

- **Launched in 1998** to provide **timely and adequate credit** to farmers.
- Initially covered **cultivation needs**, later extended in **2004** to **allied and non-farm activities**.
- **Extended in 2018-19** to **fisheries & animal husbandry farmers**.

• **Implementing Agencies**

- **Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Cooperatives.**

• **Features**

- **RuPay ATM-enabled debit card** for easy transactions.



- **One-time documentation with built-in cost escalation** in credit limits.
- **Aadhaar linkage mandatory** for interest subvention eligibility.
- **No processing fee** for loans under KCC.
- **Collateral-free loan limit raised** from ₹1 lakh to **₹1.6 lakh**.
- Covers **short-term credit** for fisheries, poultry, livestock, and aquaculture needs.

- **Objectives**

- **Short-term credit** for crop cultivation.
- **Post-harvest & marketing expenses**.
- **Household consumption needs**.
- **Working capital** for farm asset maintenance & allied activities.
- **Investment credit** for agriculture & allied sectors.

- **Financial Provisions**

- **Interest subvention of 2%** for **short-term crop loans up to ₹3 lakh**.
- **Additional 3% prompt repayment incentive**, reducing effective interest to **4%**

### About Gyan Bharatam Mission

- The Gyan Bharatam Mission has been launched to conduct a comprehensive survey, documentation, and conservation of India's rich manuscript heritage.
- It aims to cover over one crore manuscripts spread across academic institutions, museums, libraries, and private collections.
- A significant aspect of the Gyan Bharatam Mission is the establishment of the National Digital Repository of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).
- This digital platform will serve as a comprehensive resource for archiving and sharing traditional wisdom, making it accessible to researchers, students, and institutions worldwide.
- By integrating India's ancient knowledge—spanning fields such as Ayurveda, mathematics, astronomy, linguistics, and philosophy with modern education and technology, the mission aims to encourage research, innovation, and sustainable development.

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