

Factly Weekly

Compilation

2025

**For UPSC CSE Prelims
Exam**

4th Week

July 2025

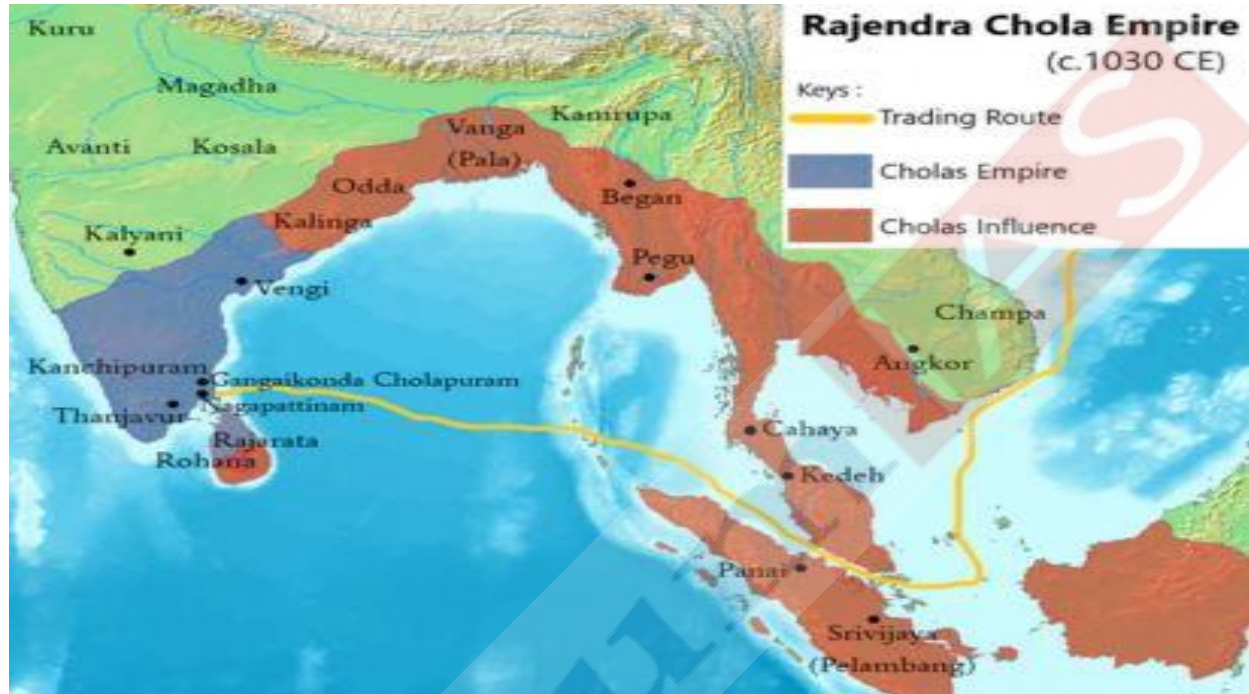
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Rajendra Chola I

News: The Ministry of Culture is all set to celebrate the birth anniversary of the great Chola emperor Rajendra Chola I with the Aadi Thiruvathirai Festival, to be held from 23rd to 27th July 2025 at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Tamil Nadu.

About Rajendra Chola I



Source – India Today

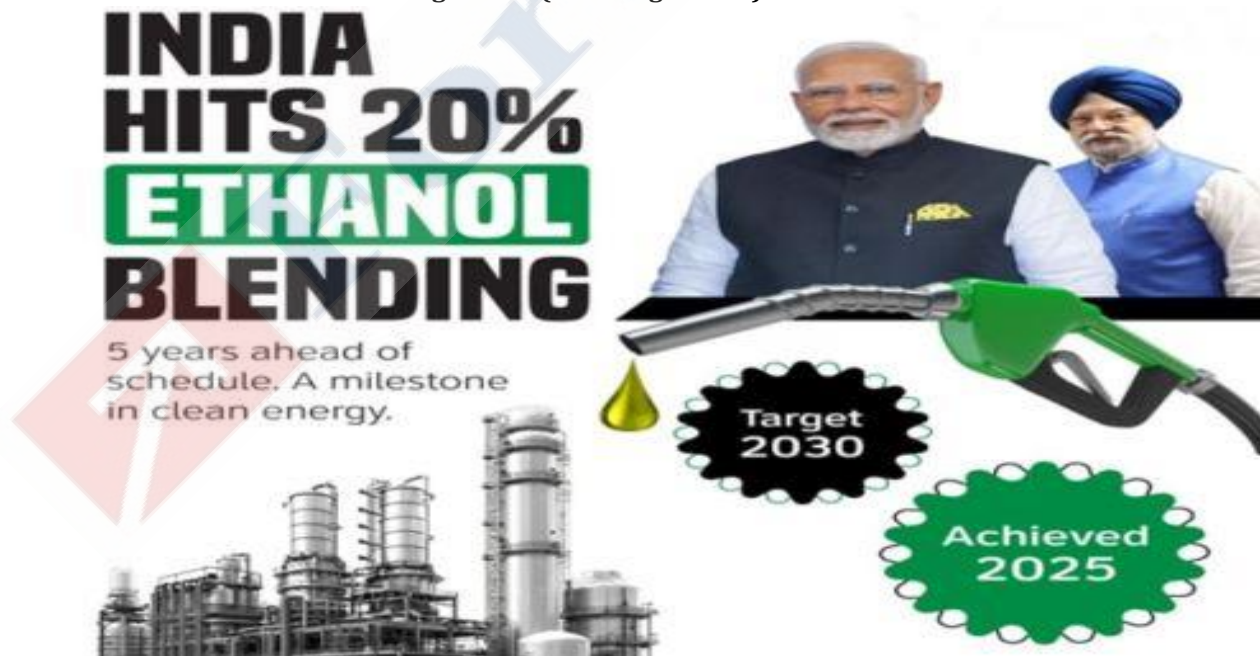
- He was a Chola Emperor who reigned from **1014 to 1044**.
- He was born in **Thanjavur to Rajaraja I** and rose to the throne in **1014 CE**, after the death of Rajaraja I.
- **During his reign**, the Chola Empire **reached its zenith** in the Indian subcontinent.
- It extended its reach via trade and conquest across the Indian Ocean, making Rajendra **one of only a few Indian monarchs who conquered territory beyond South Asia**.
- **Titles**
 - **Gangaikonda Cholan ("The Conqueror of the Ganges")**: He earned this title after his victorious northern campaigns reaching the Ganges River.
 - **Kadaram Kondan ("Conqueror of Kedah")**: It was given for his conquests in Southeast Asia.
- **New capital**: He founded a new capital called **Gangaikonda Cholapuram**, an imperial city built to **commemorate his triumphs** and serve as an **administrative and cultural center**.
- **Religion**: He followed **Shaivism**.
 - However, he also **welcomed Buddhism** and built many **stupas** (Buddhist shrines) in South-East Asia and South India.
- **Temples built**:
 - He built the **Dharasuram temple** replicating the **Tanjavore temple built by his father**.
 - He commissioned the **Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple** to celebrate his conquests reaching the Ganges River.

- Today, the temple stands as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, renowned for its intricate sculptures, Chola bronzes, and ancient inscriptions.
- **Rajendra Chola's conquests**
 - **Conquering Sri Lanka:** In 1017 CE, the king captured the whole of Sri Lanka, of which his father, Raja Chola was able to conquer only the northern half.
 - **Victory over Pandyas and Cheras:** In 1018 CE, King Rajendra marched to Pandya and Chera regions and fighting a fierce battle, defeated their kings.
 - **Defeating Chaulakyas:** In 1021 CE, Rajendra Chola conquered the Chaulakya territory against Jayasimha at the **battle of Maski**.
 - **Reaching Ganga:** He conquered regions around Ganga, from **Palas of Bengal**.
- **Oveseas Conquests**
 - He was among the first Indian kings to **conquer territories outside India**.
 - His conquests included areas of present day **Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Laos, Andamans, Lakshadweep and Cambodia**.
- In all these Conquests, **Krishnan Raman** served as the Commander in Chief of the Chola forces, under Rajendra Chola.
- **Feared by Mohammed of Gazni**
 - Mohammed of Gazni while raiding the north west of India, dared not to cross into the Chola kingdom, fearing its might.

Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme (EBP Programme)

News: India has successfully achieved 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol in 2025, five years ahead of its original target set for 2030.

About Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme (EBP Programme)



Source – AIR News

- It is a flagship initiative to **promote the use of ethanol** by blending it with **petrol**.

- **Launched in:** It was launched in **January, 2003**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG)
- **Aim:** It sought to **promote the use of alternative and environment friendly fuels** and to **reduce import dependency** for energy requirements.
- **Targets:** As per the programme targets, India has to **achieve 10% blending rate (E10) by 2021-22** and **20% blending rate (E20) by 2025-26**.
- The **National Policy of Biofuels-2018**, as amended in 2022, **advanced** the target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol to Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26 from 2030.
- **Coverage:** It is being implemented **across the country** except Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Procurement of ethanol**
 - The **Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs)** are to procure ethanol from domestic sources.
 - Government has notified **administered price of ethanol** since 2014.
- **Status**
 - **Ethanol blending in petrol** has risen from just **1.5% in 2014 to 20% in 2025**, a nearly 13-fold increase over 11 years.
 - **Ethanol production** has surged from 38 crore litres in 2014 to **661.1 crore litres by June 2025**.
 - **Savings:** India has saved approximately **1.36 lakh crore rupees** in foreign exchange by **reducing its dependency** on imported crude oil.
 - About **1.96 lakh crore rupees** have been paid to **distilleries**, fueling the growth of the domestic biofuel industry.
 - Additionally, **1.18 lakh crore rupees** have been disbursed to **farmers**, thereby enhancing rural incomes and supporting the agricultural economy.
 - The increased use of ethanol-blended petrol has helped **reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 698 lakh tonnes**, contributing to India's climate goals.

About Ethanol

- Ethanol is an **anhydrous ethyl alcohol** having chemical formula of **C₂H₅OH**.
- **Source:** It can be produced from **sugarcane, maize, wheat**, etc. which are having **high starch content**.
- In India, ethanol is mainly **produced from sugarcane molasses** by fermentation process.
- Ethanol can be **mixed with gasoline** to form different blends.
- As the ethanol molecule **contains oxygen**, it allows the engine to more **completely combust** the fuel, resulting in fewer emissions and thereby reducing the occurrence of environmental pollution.
- Since ethanol is **produced from plants** that harness the power of the sun, ethanol is also considered as **renewable fuel**.

Key facts about Cambodia

News: Fresh clashes erupted again between Thailand and Cambodia along their border, marking the most violent escalation in over a decade.

Key facts about Cambodia



Source – Britannica

- **Location:** It is located in Mainland Southeast Asia.
 - It lies entirely **within the tropics**.
- **Borders:** It is bordered by **Thailand** to the northwest, **Laos** to the north, and **Vietnam** to the east.
 - It has a 443-kilometre coastline along the **Gulf of Thailand**.
- **Climate:** It is dominated by a **tropical climate**.
- **Terrain:** Its landscape is characterised by a **low-lying central plain** that is surrounded by **uplands** and **low mountains**.
- **Drainage:** The two dominant hydrological features of Cambodia are the **Mekong River** and the **Tonle Sap (Great Lake)**.
 - The Mekong River rises in the **Plateau of Tibet** and empties into the **South China Sea**.
- **Capital:** Its capital and most populous city is **Phnom Penh**.
- **Polity:** It is a **constitutional monarchy** with a unitary structure and a parliamentary form of government.

Henley Passport Index 2025

News: The Henley Passport Index 2025 (July edition) was released by Henley and Partners Consultancy.

About Henley Passport Index

- The Henley Passport Index ranks the world's passports **based on the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa**.
- The index is compiled using exclusive data from the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)**, and it is updated **quarterly**.
- **Global 2025 Leaders:**
 - **1st: Singapore** – Access to 193 destinations
 - **2nd: Japan & South Korea** – Access to 190 destinations
 - **3rd: Seven EU countries** (e.g., Germany, France) – Access to 189 destination
- **Decline in Traditional Powers:**

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- **U.S.passport:** 10th place (182 destinations)
- **U.K.passport:** 6th place (186 destinations)
- **India's 2025 Position:**
 - Rank climbed from 85th to 77th
 - Visa-Free Access: Increased from 57 to 59 countries
- **New Additions:** Philippines and Sri Lanka

National Sports Governance Bill, 2025

News- The Central Government tabled the National Sports Governance Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha to reform and modernize the governance structure of sports administration in India.

Key Features of the National Sports Governance Bill, 2025

1. Establishment of Statutory Sports Bodies

- **National Olympic Committee (NOC):** Designated as the sole governing body for Olympic sports in India.
- **National Paralympic Committee (NPC):** Sole authority for governing Paralympic sports in the country.
- **Other Federations:** The Bill formally recognises *National Sports Federations (NSFs)* and *Regional Sports Federations (RSFs)* to streamline sports governance at national and regional levels.

2. Creation of the National Sports Board

- *A statutory regulatory body akin to SEBI, tasked with overseeing the functioning of all sports federations, including the BCCI.*
- *Empowered to grant recognition to sports bodies and enforce uniform governance standards.*
- *Will register all affiliated units of NSFs to improve transparency and coordination in the sports ecosystem.*
- *Equipped with budgetary support and capacity to hire domain experts in law, auditing, and governance.*

3. Setting up of the National Sports Tribunal

- *An independent dispute resolution body with powers equivalent to a civil court.*
- *Headed by a Chairperson (a sitting or retired Supreme Court judge or Chief Justice of a High Court) along with two members with expertise in sports, administration, and law.*
- *Responsible for adjudicating disputes related to:*
 - Athlete selection
 - Federation elections
 - Governance matters
- *Appeals from the Tribunal can be made only to the Supreme Court.*
- *Civil courts will have no jurisdiction over matters covered by the Tribunal.*
- *All expenses will be met from the Consolidated Fund of India.*

4. National Sports Election Panel- A dedicated panel to ensure free and fair elections for the Executive and Athletes' Committees of all recognised National Sports Bodies.

5. Code of Ethics and Transparency

- Mandatory for every National Sports Body to adopt a *Code of Ethics* in line with international norms.
- Emphasis on governance through information—ensuring federations make essential data publicly accessible.

6. Safe Sport Policy and Grievance Redressal

- Requires all sports bodies to implement a Safe Sports Policy to protect vulnerable groups, especially women and minor athletes.
- Grievance redressal mechanisms must be athlete-friendly, transparent, and time-bound.

7. Age and Tenure norms for Administrators

- *Upper age limit raised to 75 years.*
- Removal of fixed tenure restrictions to help Indian administrators secure leadership roles in international sports bodies.

8. Bringing the BCCI under the regulatory framework

- Though traditionally outside the ambit of government oversight, the Bill proposes bringing the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) under its regulatory scope.
- Once the Bill is enacted, the *BCCI will have to get official recognition from the new National Sports Board*. Any disputes involving the BCCI will be handled by the National Sports Tribunal.

Art Forms (Sohra, Pattachitra, Patua)

News: The artists of Sohrai, Pattachitra and Patua art forms participated in the second edition of Kala Utsav 2025 at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

About Art Forms (Sohra, Pattachitra, Patua)

About Pattachitra Paintings



Figure 1. Source – IndiaArt

- **Origin:** The term Pattachitra (pata = cloth, chitra = picture in Sanskrit) refers to **ancient cloth-based scroll painting traditions** from **Odisha** and, in a distinct form, **West Bengal**.
 - In **Odisha**, the art flourished **around Puri** and is closely associated with **Jagannath culture**.

- **Themes**

- It showcases narrative depictions of **Hindu gods, goddesses, and religious stories**, especially episodes from the life of **Jagannath, Krishna, and other deities**.

- **Technique used**

- They are painted on **cloth** or sometimes on **palm leaves**.
- The cloth is treated with a **chalk-gum base**, polished, and then painted with natural **mineral and vegetable pigments**.
- Artists are called **Chitrakars**.

- **Style features**

- The paintings are recognized with **bold, black outlines, rich colors** (mainly red, yellow, blue, green, and white), and elaborate **decorative borders**.

- Their figures are stylized like **almond-shaped eyes**, elaborate ornamentation, and compact composition.

About Sohra Paintings



Figure 2. Source – MeMeraki

- **Origin:** It is a traditional tribal mural art form originating in **Jharkhand**, primarily among the **Santhal, Oraon, Munda, Sadan, and Ho** tribes.

- It is mainly practiced in **Hazaribagh district** but also in parts of **Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal**.

- **Festive association:** Traditionally, women of the household paint on the mud walls of their homes during the holiday of Sohrai, which falls just a day after the **Hindu celebration of Diwali**.

- **Themes**

- They are dominated by **natural and agricultural motifs**—animals (hens, buffaloes, horses, wild animals), birds, lotuses, trees, and scenes of village life. Fertility, nature,

and harmony are central themes.

- **Technique used**

- The art is traditionally **created by women** using their **fingers, twigs, or brushes**.
- **Colors** are naturally sourced—from **clay, charcoal, rice paste, and leaves**.
- Distinct **clay varieties** (kali matti, charak matti, dudhi matti, lal matti, pili matti) are used for hues.

- **Styles**

- Vibrant, lively designs with **bold red and black lines**.
- **Red** symbolizes **ancestral blood** while **black** denotes **death or Shiva**.
- The paintings are **often matriarchal**, with pregnant figures and animals depicted with their young.

About Patua Painting



Source – IndianArt

- **Origin:** It is a traditional folk art form from the state of **West Bengal**.
 - It is also practised in **Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, and parts of Bangladesh**.

- **Style**
 - They are primarily **created on fabric scrolls**, which are subsequently utilised by itinerant **storytellers** to convey stories from **Hindu mythology, folklore, and current events**.
- **Themes**
 - They frequently **depict Hindu deities and mythical stories**.
 - Some paintings depict **current events or social topics** as well.
- **Technique used**
 - Traditional Patua paintings are distinguished by their **vibrant colours, clean lines, and dynamic compositions**.
 - The painters produce their paintings with **natural hues like turmeric, indigo, and red ochre**.
 - The scrolls are often painted on **coarse cotton cloth**, then **reinforced on the back** with fabric from ancient saris.
- **Types:** Patua artwork is classified into **two types**:
 - **Scroll paintings:** These are **traditional** Patua paintings used to **tell stories**.
 - They are often **long and narrow**, reaching lengths of **several feet**.
 - **Panel paintings:** These are **smaller**, more **individual** paintings that are usually **hung or framed**.
 - They show **various subjects**, including deities, animals, and ordinary scenes.

Preah Vihear Temple

News: Fresh clashes erupted again between Thailand and Cambodia along their border for Preah Vihear Temple, marking the most violent escalation in over a decade.

About Preah Vihear Temple



Source – UNESCO

- **Location:** The temple is located in **Preah Vihear province**, set on top of a 1,722 feet cliff in the **Dangrek Mountains in Cambodia**.

- The mountains are a **natural border** between **Cambodia and Thailand**.
- **Chief deity:** It is a temple dedicated to **lord Shiva**.
- **Name:** The name means “**Sacred Sanctuary**” in **Khmer**.
- **Architecture**
 - The temple dates back to the **9th century**, built during the **reign of the Khmer Empire**.
 - The temple is counted among the **most unusual among Khmer temples** because of its construction along a **long north-south axis**.
 - The temple is **not built in the conventional rectangular format** which generally faces toward the east.
 - The **series of connected buildings, paths, and staircases along an 800-metre stretch** are simply breathtaking.
- **History of dispute over the ownership of the temple**
 - **Dispute:** The temple has been the centre of dispute **between Thailand and Cambodia** for a long time now.
 - In **1962**, Cambodia and Thailand **fought for the over ownership** of the temple.
 - But the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** in the Hague said that the **temple belongs to Cambodia**.
- **Recognition:**
 - The Temple joined the prestigious list of **UNESCO World Heritage Sites on 7 July 2008**.
 - Soon after this, the dispute between Cambodia and Thailand over the temple, once again started but this time too **ICJ passed the judgement in favour of Cambodia in 2013**.

Long-Billed Bush Warbler

News: A team of five birders has recorded India's first confirmed sighting of the Long-billed Bush Warbler in 46 years, spotting it in Ladakh's Suru Valley.

About Long-Billed Bush Warbler



Source: HT

- A **medium-sized songbird** with a **long tail** and a **distinctively long, slender bill**.

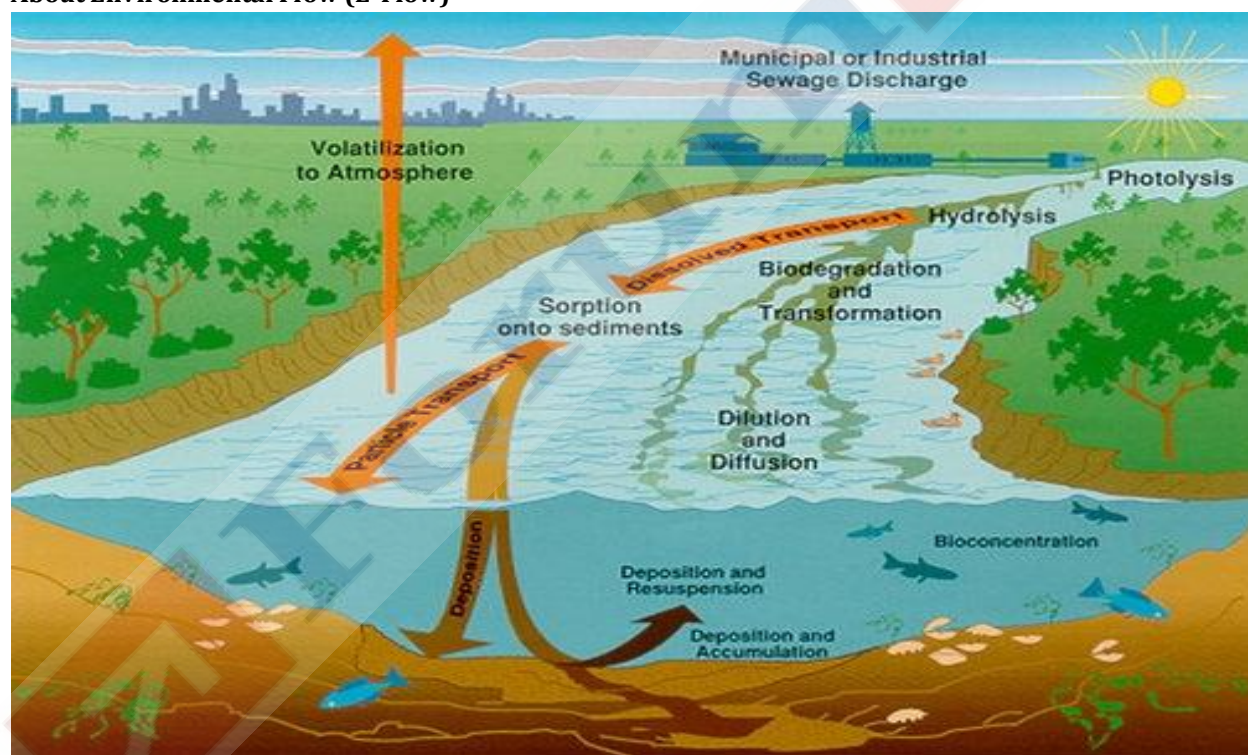
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- Its scientific name is **Locustella major**.
- It is also known as **long-billed grasshopper warbler**.
- **Appearance:** It appears **elongated**, with **brownish-olive plumage** finely streaked on the back.
- They are found in **select mountainous regions of Central Asia**.
- **Distribution:** **China, India, Pakistan, and Tajikistan**.
- **Habitat:** It lives in areas with short grasses and shrubs, such as Rumex and sea buckthorn, and prefers sheltered clearings with thickets of wild gooseberry (*Ribes grossularia*) along the edges of spruce forests.
- They prefer **grassy slopes** interspersed with **bushes, weeds, and grass**.
- Occasionally **emerges onto small bushes** to sing. Song is a **dull clicking sound**.
- **IUCN Conservation Status:** Near Threatened

Environmental Flow (E-Flow)

News: The Union Jal Shakti Minister chaired a key meeting to ensure environmental flow (e-flow) in the Ganga River and its tributaries, aiming to promote sustainable river management.

About Environmental Flow (E-Flow)



Source: PIB

- **Definition:** E-flow refers to the **quantity, timing, and quality** of water flows required to sustain **freshwater ecosystems** and the **livelihoods** that depend on them.
- **Importance:** It will maintain **ecological integrity** of rivers and their estuaries.
- **Human Benefit:** It ensures **human welfare**, especially in regions with **competitive and regulated** water use.

Need for E-Flow

- **River Interventions:** Dams, barrages, pollution, and encroachments have disrupted river systems.
- **Impact:** Degraded aquatic biodiversity, reduced river self-cleaning capacity, and disturbed hydrological cycles.
- **Solution:** E-flow ensures **minimum water flow** to preserve river health and sustain **aquatic life**.
- **Aquatic Biodiversity:** E-flow protects the **habitat and breeding cycles** of key fish and aquatic species.
- **Economic Benefits:** Long-term **livelihood security** for communities depending on rivers (e.g., fisheries, agriculture).

Bambusa Tulda

News: Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati Researchers have developed an eco-friendly composite material made of 'Bambusa tulda', a fast-growing bamboo species in Northeast India.

About Bambusa Tulda



Source – Meserii

- It is commonly known as **Indian timber bamboo, sweet bamboo, Bengal Bamboo or Spineless Indian Bamboo**.
- **Habitat and distribution:** It is found in **mixed deciduous forest in plains, valleys, and along streams**, up to elevations of 1,500 m. The **range of its distribution** is from **northern India to Myanmar and Thailand**.
- **Size:** It can grow up to **20-25 meters tall**, with a diameter of **10-15 centimeters (4-6 inches)**.
- **Conditions required for cultivation**
 - **Temperature:** It grows best in areas where annual daytime temperatures are within the range **22 – 28°C**, but can tolerate 9 – 32°C.
 - **Rainfall:** It prefers a mean annual rainfall in the range **1,200 – 2,500 mm**, but tolerates 700 – 4,500mm.
 - **Soil:** It grows best in fertile, medium to **heavy soils**.
- **Uses:** The culms are generally used for **construction, scaffolding, furniture, boxes, basketry, mats, household utensils, handicrafts and as raw material for paper pulp**.

Gangaikonda Cholapuram

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered prayers at the ancient Shiva temple of Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Tamil Nadu.

About Gangaikonda Cholapuram

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Source – TH

- **Location:** It is located in the Udayarpalayam taluk of **Ariyalur district in Tamil Nadu**.
- **Built by:** Rajendra Chola I (regnal years 1012-1044 CE)
- **Name:** The name “Gangaikonda Cholapuram” means “**the city of the Chola who conquered the Ganga**”, referring to **Rajendra I’s military expedition to northern India**, during which pots of Ganga water were brought back to the south.
- **As a Chola capital:** **Rajendra I** shifted the Chola **capital from Thanjavur** to Gangaikonda Cholapuram, which remained the imperial capital for over 250 years.
 - It was built to **commemorate his victory over the Pala Dynasty** and the water from the river Ganga was brought to this place.
 - The **city** is referred to as **Gangapuri** in **Kalingattuparani**, composed by **Jayankondar**.
- **Importance:** It was the **second largest and important city** in the 11th-12th Centuries and the centre of **political, commercial and cultural activities**, like **Madurai** in Pandyanadu and **Karur** in Cheranadu.
- **Architectural features**
 - The city was **fortified** with both **inner and outer defensive walls**, as revealed by archaeological excavations.
 - The **outer fortification** was made of **burnt bricks**, measuring **six to eight feet in width** and filled with **sand** between two layers of brick walls.
- **Chola Gangam Lake:** According to **Tiruvallangadu Copper Plates**, it was dug by King Rajendra Chola I to celebrate his northern campaign.
 - It is now known as **Ponneri Lake**.
- **Temple:** The **Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple** or the **Brihadisvara Temple** was built by Rajendra Chola I in his capital.
 - It rivals the **Rajarajeswaram** (also known as Brihadisvara Temple) built by his father in **Thanjavur**.
 - The temple is part of the “**Great Living Chola Temples**”, a group of **UNESCO World Heritage Sites** that also includes the **Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur** and the **Airavatesvara Temple in Darasuram**.
- **Archeological and literary evidences**
 - The **Tiruvallangadu, Esalam, and Karanthai Copper Plates**, several inscriptions, and literary works provide the **evidences of the Brihadisvara Temple**.

- An elaborate **description of the citadel** comes from **Muvar Ula of Ottakuttar**.
- **Rajaraja Cholan Ula** gives an account of almost all the **important places of the city**.

E3 Countries

News: Iranian diplomats are meeting counterparts from E3 countries for renewed nuclear talks amid warnings of sanctions.

About E3 Countries



Source – Tehran Times

- It is an **informal foreign and security cooperation** arrangement between the **UK, Germany and France**.
- It was **established** in 2003, when the UK was still a member of the EU.
- **Reason for establishment:** The E3 met for the **first time** after the **US attacked Iraq in 2003** to identify a trilateral strategy towards Iraq, and **manage nuclear risks coming from Iran**.
- **Main task:** The E3's main task is **to negotiate with Iran** due to growing security concerns.
- **Feature:** It could be described as **an informal kind of 'minilateralism'**, i.e. a small **group of like-minded parties working together**, either outside or inside international organisations.

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF)

News: Recently, Nepal experienced a catastrophic Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) event which caused a flash flood, and washed away a China-built friendship bridge.

About Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF)



Source – ETV Bharat

- The GLOFs are **flash floods of extreme magnitude** that occur when the **natural dams**, made up of ice, rock debris, or moraine, hold back glacial lakes **rupture or are breached**.
- These **glacial lakes** typically form as a **result of the melting of glaciers** in high-altitude areas.
- **Causes:** The primary **causes** of GLOFs include:
 - Global warming and glacial melting
 - Ice or snow avalanches
 - Earthquakes
 - Landslides
 - Volcanic eruptions
 - Internal water dynamics
- **Vulnerability of India to GLOFs**
 - There exist **over 54,000 glaciers in the Hindukush-Himalayan ranges** which are **retreating** at alarming rates due to temperature surges in the wake of Climate Change.
 - The **average temperature** in the region has **increased by 0.28°C per decade** between 1951 and 2020 which has **hastened the glacial lake formation** as well as the glacial retreat.
 - Scientific assessments and studies indicate the **higher vulnerability of the Eastern Himalayas** to GFOFs as compared to the Western Himalayan region, with the former facing twice the risks than the latter.
 - It is contended that the **threats would triple by 2050** with **more hotspots** emerging farther west.

- **Steps taken by India**

- The **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)** has initiated a **proactive shift** from mere **post-disaster response to risk reduction** through its Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (CoDRR).
- **Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG)** monitors the **glaciers** and provides comprehensive **analysis of factors** that trigger hazards and its associated downstream **risks**.
 - It has prepared **glacial lake inventories** for Uttarakhand (2015) and Himachal Pradesh (2018), identifying **1,266 lakes (7.6 km²) in Uttarakhand and 958 lakes (9.6 km²) in Himachal Pradesh**.
- **Central Water Commission (CWC)** monitors **902 Glacial lakes and water bodies**, to enable the detection of relative change in water spread areas of Glacial lakes and water bodies.
- **National Programme: The National Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Risk Mitigation Project (NGRMP)** is implemented in **four states** namely, **Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand** at a financial outlay of Rs. 150.00 crore.
 - It has one of its components as **GLOF monitoring and Early Warning Systems (EWS)** including **remote sensing data, community involvement for monitoring, alerting / dissemination**.
- Two **Automatic Weather Stations (AWS)** have been installed in **Sikkim** with further deployments of **EWS** planned in collaboration with C-DAC, ISRO and Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad to provide early warning to local communities in case of any GLOF event.
- **Risk Indexing of Glacial Lakes:** It will be done by the **CWC** which will involve **identifying and ranking** lakes based on their **likelihood of failure and potential damage** they could cause in the event of GLOF.

- **Past Examples of GLOFs in India**

- The **South Lhonak GLOF in 2023 in Sikkim**
- **Chamoli floods, Uttarakhand (2021)**- caused by melting of **Nanda Devi glacier**
- **Chorabari GLOF in 2013**, known as the **Kedarnath** catastrophe

Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

News– Atal Pension Yojana (APY) has reached a major milestone with total gross enrollments crossing 8 crore.

About Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- **Purpose:** Provides pension coverage for workers in the unorganised sector.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Finance
- **Launched in:** 2015
- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Implementing agency:** Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) under the National Pension System (NPS).
- **Eligibility:**
 - Individuals aged 18–40 years
 - Must hold a bank account
 - Must not be income tax payers
- **Benefits:**
 - **Guaranteed monthly pension of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000** after the age of 60
 - In case of the **subscriber's death**, the **spouse continues to receive the pension**

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- After both spouse and subscriber pass away, the accumulated corpus is paid to the nominee
- In case of premature death, the spouse can choose to continue contributions until the subscriber would have turned 60
- **Payment Frequency:** Monthly / Quarterly / Half-yearly

First-ever “grassland bird census” in Kaziranga National Park

News: Recently, the first ever grassland birds census was conducted in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) in Assam.

First-ever “grassland bird census” in Kaziranga National Park



Source – IE

- It was a survey to **record the grassland bird population in Kaziranga National Park**.
- It was **conducted** Between March 18 and May 25, 2025.
- **Project:** The survey was a brainchild of a **INSPIRE fellow Chiranjib Bora**, who is studying the threatened grassland bird **Black-breasted parrotbill**.
 - The survey was jointly conducted by a team of forest officials, scientists, and conservationists.
- **Features of census**
 - The survey **prioritised 10 species** that are either globally **threatened or endemic** to the Brahmaputra floodplains. These species are-
 - Bengal Florican, Swamp Francolin, **Finn’s Weaver (Endangered)**, Swamp Grass Babbler, Jerdon’s Babbler, Slender-billed Babbler, Black-breasted Parrotbill, Marsh Babbler, Bristled Grassbird, and Indian Grassbird.
 - It recorded a total of **43 grassland bird species**, including **1 Critically Endangered, 2 Endangered, and 6 Vulnerable species**.
- **Methodology used**
 - **Traditional methods like visual counting** are insufficient in surveying small, shy, and highly camouflaged birds.
 - **Passive acoustic recording:** The use of **passive acoustic recording monitoring method** was used for the survey.
 - The acoustic **recorders were placed in tall trees** near grasslands during the breeding season of the birds.
 - The instruments recorded all the **birds singing** in the landscape.

- **Spectrogram:** The surveyors used **software to create a spectrogram**, which is a graphical representation of the sound.
- **Birdnet:** A tool called **Birdnet** was used to survey, which **uses machine learning to try and identify species by bird song**.
- **Importance:** The grassland birds are considered as “**an indicator of good health**” of an ecosystem.
- **Threats:** Habitat loss and its fragmentation are threatening the future of these bird species.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS)

News: During his recent visit to Tamil Nadu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that the country's railway infrastructure has entered a new era of modernization under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme.

About Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS)

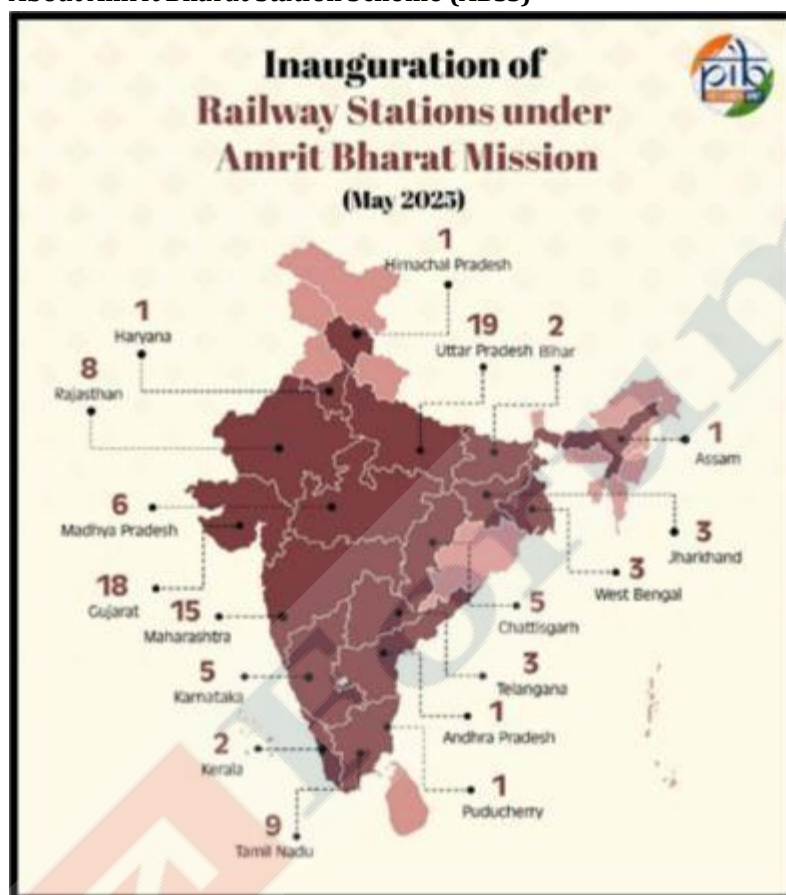


Figure 3. Source – PIB

This Scheme is a **long-term plan to redevelop and modernize railway stations** across India in a phased manner in order to **elevate the travel experience** for millions of passengers.

- Under this scheme, **detailed plans** are made for **each station** and the work is done in **phases**, based on what each station needs.

- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Railways

- **Started in:** The origin of the scheme can be traced back to **2021**, when **Gandhinagar** became the **first Railway station** to undergo modernization.

- **Goal:** The goal of the scheme is to **make stations cleaner, more comfortable, and easier to use**.

- The scheme **focuses on upgrading the station buildings**, connecting both sides of the city through the station, and **linking stations with other transport options** like buses and metros.

- **Objective:** Objectives of the scheme are:

- **Preparation of Master Plans** of the Railway stations and implementation in phases to enhance the facilities including and beyond the Minimum Essential Amenities (MEA)
- Cater for the **introduction of new amenities** as well as upgradation and replacement of existing amenities
- **Relocate redundant/old buildings** in a cost-efficient manner.
- **‘One Station One Product’ scheme:** **Local products** will be sold at kiosks under the ‘One Station One Product’ scheme.

- **Features**

- The **designs** of redeveloped station buildings are **inspired by local culture, heritage and architecture**. Some examples are-
 - The **Ahmedabad station** draws inspiration from the **Modhera Sun Temple**
 - **Dwarka station** is inspired by the **Dwarkadheesh Temple**
 - **Gurugram station** will carry the **IT theme**
 - **Baleshwar station** in Odisha will be designed on theme of **Bhagwan Jagannath Temple**
 - **Kumbhakonam Station** in Tamil Nadu is influenced by the **Chola architecture**.
 - **Divyang friendly**: The stations are made **friendly for Divyangs** as part of “**Sugamya Bharat Mission**” or ‘Accessible India Campaign’.
 - **Other key features** of these stations include enhanced passenger information systems, free Wi-Fi, wider roads, well-constructed underpasses, foot overbridges, modern waiting areas, executive lounges, spacious circulating areas, grand porches, enhanced parking facilities, alongside improved lighting arrangements, modern restrooms, and lifts, all designed to be disability-friendly.
- **Progress: Over 1,300 stations are being redeveloped** with modern facilities, under the Scheme.

Exercise Bold Kurukshetra

News: The 14th edition of the India-Singapore Joint Military Exercise ‘Bold Kurukshetra 2025’ Begins in Jodhpur.

About Exercise Bold Kurukshetra



Source – AIR News

- It is a **joint military exercise** between the **Indian Army** and the **Singapore Armed Forces**.
- **First edition:** The Exercise was first conducted in **2005**.
- **2025 edition:** The **14th edition** of year 2025 will be conducted at **Jodhpur, Rajasthan**.
- **Objective:** The objective of the exercise is to **enhance interoperability** and **joint training capabilities** of both armies under a United Nations mandate, thereby strengthening bilateral defence cooperation.
- **Key focus:** The exercise will be conducted as a **tabletop exercise** and **computer-based wargame** aimed at validating operational procedures for **mechanised warfare**.
- **Contingents:** The exercise will witness the participation of the **42 Singapore Armoured Regiment** of the **4 Singapore Armoured Brigade** and the Indian Army's **Mechanised Infantry Regiment**.

New Wasps Species

News: Four new species of parasitoid wasps have been identified: *Idris bianor*, *Idris furvus*, *Idris hyllus*, and *Idris longiscapus*.

About New Wasps

- These belong to the genus *Idris* (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae).
- They are found in **agroecosystems** and **semi-natural habitats** across **West Bengal, India**.
- They are extremely **small and microscopic** in size.
- They are known to **lay eggs inside spider egg sacs**.
- These are **primary egg parasitoids** of **jumping spiders (Salticidae family)**.
- They display a phenomenon called **gregarious parasitism**, where **multiple wasps** develop from a **single spider egg sac**, rather than just one.
- They act as **natural biocontrol agents** by regulating **spider populations** and contribute to **maintaining balance in arthropod communities**.

About Parasitism

- Parasitism is a long-term symbiotic relationship where one organism, known as the **parasite**, lives in or on another organism, the **host**.
- The parasite depends on the host for food, protection, or reproduction.
- Examples: Tapeworms, roundworms, and fleas, etc

Types of Parasitism

- **Ectoparasitism** – Parasite lives **on** the outer surface of the host.
- **Endoparasitism** – Parasite lives **inside** the host's body or cells.
- **Mesoparasitism** – Parasite lives **partly inside and partly outside** the host.
- **Obligate Parasitism** – Parasite **cannot survive** without a host.
- **Facultative Parasitism** – Parasite **can survive independently**, but may become parasitic under certain conditions.

Paithani sarees

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' praised the traditional craftsmanship of Paithani sarees.

About Paithani sarees

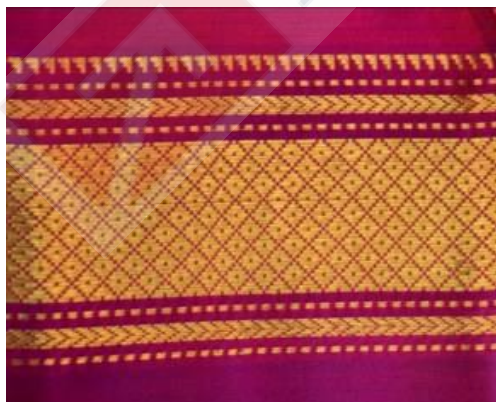


Figure 4. Source: sahapedia.org

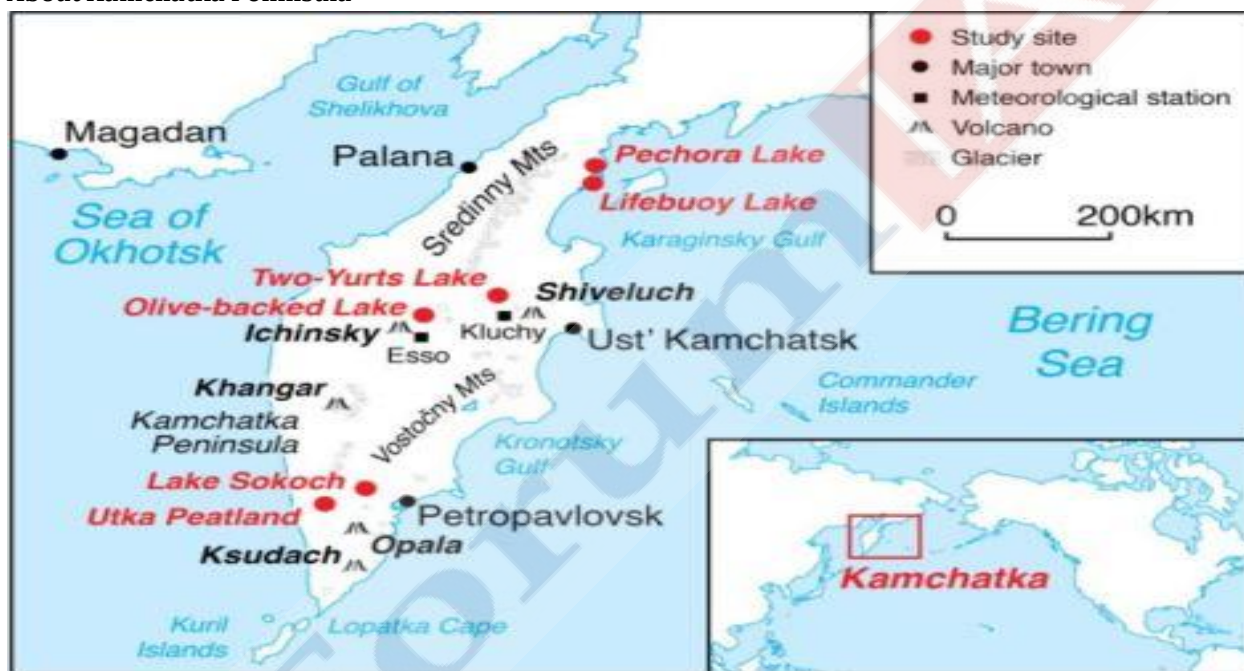
- Paithani sarees originated from the town of **Paithan in Maharashtra, India**
- **Distinctive Style:** These sarees are famous for their **square motifs, vibrant colors, and intricate peacock designs on the pallu**, symbolizing elegance and heritage.
- The *Narali* is one of the most common borders seen on the *Paithani*.
- **Material & Technique:** Made from **fine silk and zari (gold thread)** available in the country
- Paithanis are entirely handwoven using traditional methods, making them one of the **most luxurious and expensive sarees in India**.

- **Cultural Significance:** Paithani sarees, once called “*Dev Vastra*”, were worn by royals and revered in ancient Hindu and Buddhist texts. Today, they are a cherished part of Maharashtrian weddings and festive traditions.
- Paithani sarees are considered a **symbol of Maharashtrian pride and artistry**.
- **GI Tag:** Paithani sarees were granted the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2010**, recognizing their unique origin and traditional craftsmanship from Paithan, Maharashtra.

Kamchatka Peninsula

News: A powerful 8.7-magnitude earthquake struck off Russia’s Far East Kamchatka Peninsula, triggering tsunami warnings across the Pacific region.

About Kamchatka Peninsula



Source – Sciencedirect

- **Location:** It is a peninsula located in **far eastern Russia** and lying between the **Sea of Okhotsk** on the west and the **Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea** on the east.
- **Topography:** Its topography is dominated by **two mountain chains** – the **Sredinny and Vostochny Mountains** which are **separated by the Central Kamchatka Depression** – a deep and 150 km wide valley.
- **Rivers:** The **Kamchatka River** (falls into Pacific Ocean) and the **Bystraja River** (falls into Sea of Okhotsk) are the main rivers of the Peninsula.
- **Peak:** The highest peak is the **Klyuchevskaya Sopka (4750 m)** which is also the **highest active volcano in Eurasia**.
- **Volcanic arcs:** Kamchatka is one of the world’s **most volcanically active regions** with the **Pacific Plate is actively subducting beneath the Kamchatka Peninsula** at about 80–100 mm per year resulting in three distinct volcanic arcs.
 - The Peninsula contains the “**volcanoes of Kamchatka**”, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, that form part of the Ring of Fire.

- **Geysers:** It is home to the **Valley of Geysers**, located at the junction of the **Shumnaya and Geysernaya rivers**.
 - The Valley of Geysers has the **second-largest concentration of geysers** in the world (after Icelandic geyser fields).
- **Oceanic trench:** The **10,500-metre-deep Kuril-Kamchatka Trench** runs immediately offshore along the Pacific coast of the peninsula.
- **Climate:** It is generally considered to have a **sub-arctic climate** and is wetter and milder than inland parts of east Siberia.
- **Ocean currents:** **Cold currents in the Sea of Okhotsk** and the **cold East Kamchatka Current** (also called the **Oyashio or Kurile current**) have an important impact on the coastal margins of The Peninsula resulting in a cool and maritime climate.
- **Vegetation:** It lies in the **boreal zone** of Eurasia and about a third of the area is forested and another one-third is covered with shrub.
- **Fauna:** **Brown bear (*Ursus arctos beringianus*)**, snow ram, northern deer, sable and wolverine, **Stellar's sea eagle (50% of the world's population)**, white-tailed eagle, golden eagle, gyrfalcon and peregrine falcon.
- **Inhabitants:** Most of the inhabitants are **Russian**, with **indigenous Koryak, Chukchi, and Kamchadal tribes**.

Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR)

News: The first large-scale assessment of the tigers' population has revealed that the Kaziranga Tiger Reserve has the third-highest density of tigers in the world.

About Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR)



Figure 5. Source – TH

- **Location:** It is located in the flood plain of the **Brahmaputra River**, on the **foothills of Karbi-Anglong district**. It is spread across the districts of **Golaghat, Nagaon and Sonitpur of Assam**.
 - Biogeographically, Kaziranga belongs to the North East Brahmaputra Valley Province.
- **Terrain**
 - The terrain of the reserve is **flat with gentle slope from east to west**.
- The habitat comprises of alluvial deposits from the Brahmaputra River system.
- **Rivers:** The **river Diffalu**, a **tributary of the Brahmaputra**, flows through the National Park area (core tiger habitat), while another **tributary Moradifalu** flows along its southern boundary.
- **Corridor**
 - The reserve has corridor connectivity through the **island systems** of Brahmaputra with the **Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park and the Nameri Tiger Reserve**.

- **Vegetation**
 - The reserve supports mainly **four types of vegetations** – alluvial inundated grasslands, alluvial savanna woodlands, tropical moist mixed deciduous forests, and tropical semi-evergreen forests.
- **Flora:** Bombax ceiba, Albizzia procera, Albizzia odorotissima, Albizzia lucida, Careya arborea, Premna latifolia, Lagerstroemia parviflora, Dillenia pentagyna and, Zizyphus jujuba.
- **Fauna**
 - Many **endangered and threatened species** like Rhino, Tiger, Eastern swamp deer, Elephant, Buffalo, Hoolock gibbon, Capped langur and Gangetic river dolphin are commonly found in the habitat.
- **Latest tiger survey**
 - The survey documented **148 tigers in the reserve**, up from 104 recorded in 2022, 99 in 2018 and 96 in 2014.
 - It has the **third-highest density of tigers in the world**, after Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttarakhand and Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka.

New Rules for Contaminated Site Management Notified

News: The Union environment ministry has notified the Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025 for remediation of contaminated sites by those responsible for contamination.

New Rules for Contaminated Site Management Notified



Figure 6. Source – NH

- The **Environment (Protection) Rules for Management of Contaminated Sites, 2025** are framed by the Ministry of Environment, forest and climate change (**MoEFCC**) under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- The rules create the **country's first dedicated legal framework for identifying, remediating and monitoring contaminated sites** that

pose serious risks to human health and ecosystems.

- **Aim:** They aim to **tackle contamination in soil, sediment, and water** caused by industrial discharge, hazardous waste dumping, and past neglect.
- **Objective:** The objective is to **prevent further environmental degradation** while ensuring **polluters are held accountable** through a structured process involving scientific investigation, risk assessment and mandatory clean-up actions.

Key features

- **Identification of sites:** The framework mandates the **identification and classification** of sites as **either suspected, potentially contaminated or confirmed** – based on **evidence** from industrial activity, community complaints or historical waste records.
- **Tracking of sites:** Once a **site is flagged**, a **centralised online portal**, to be developed by the central pollution control board (CPCB), will **track its status**, enabling transparent public access to information and regulatory oversight.
- **Public participation:** **State boards** must seek **comments from affected stakeholders** within **60** days of **listing a site as contaminated** and must **publish** the final list in regional newspapers.
- **Responsibility:** The Rules create a **‘responsible person’ mechanism**, holding individuals, companies, or entities **accountable** for environmental damage.
 - Such responsible **parties must bear the full cost of remediation** and are **barred** from transferring ownership or altering land use without prior approval during or after the clean-up.
 - If the polluter is found, these **costs must be repaid within 3 months**.
 - **‘Orphan sites’:** Where a **responsible party cannot be identified**, commonly referred to as ‘orphan sites’, the government may step in with **financial support** drawn from multiple sources, including the environment relief fund, penalties from environmental violations and central or state allocations.
- **Voluntary clean-ups:** The rules also introduce provisions for voluntary clean-up, **allowing private entities to remediate** sites if they demonstrate technical expertise, financial capability and consent from landowners.
- **Monitoring**
 - The Rules call for the formation of **monitoring committees at both state and central levels**, comprising experts, ministry officials and regulators.
 - These committees are tasked with supervising implementation, recommending additional actions where necessary, and submitting annual compliance reports to the central government.
- **Funding**
 - The Rules adopt a **tiered model** for financial set-up –
 - **Himalayan and Northeastern states**, the Union government will bear 90% of the clean-up costs, with the states contributing 10%.
 - **Other states**, the Union government-state ratio will be 60:40.
 - **Union Territories (UTs)**, the entire cost will be borne by the Union government.
- **Exceptions:** The Rules **exclude** sites contaminated by:
 - Radioactive waste (covered under Atomic Energy Act)
 - Mining-related pollution
 - Marine oil pollution
 - Municipal solid waste dump sites (covered by separate legislation).

UN Nelson Mandela Prize 2025

News: Recently, Dr. Kennedy Odede, Founder and CEO of Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO) has been awarded the 2025 Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize by the United Nations.

About Nelson Mandela Prize 2025

- The United Nations Nelson Mandela Prize was established by General Assembly Resolution on 6 June 2014.
- The Prize is awarded **once every five years**, beginning in 2015, with subsequent awards in 2020 and 2025.
- The Prize recognises **two individuals—one female and one male**, who must be selected from **different geographic regions to ensure global representation**.
- The Prize honours individuals who have dedicated their lives to advancing reconciliation, social cohesion, and community development in line with UN principles.
- Winners receive a plaque with a citation and Mandela quote—no cash award.
- **Current staff members of any UN organisation are not eligible to receive the Prize.**
- The Prize is formally presented by the UN Secretary-General during the General Assembly's commemoration of Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July at UN Headquarters.
- No Indian has received the award yet.

FIDE Women's World Cup 2025

News: Divya Deshmukh becomes third Women's World Cup Winner, defeats Humpy Koneru in FIDE Women's World Cup 2025 at Batumi, Georgia.

With this victory, she becomes eligible to be India's fourth woman to earn the Grandmaster title, following Koneru Humpy, Harika Dronavalli, and Vaishali Rameshbabu

About FIDE Women's World Cup 2025

- It is a premier international tournament organized by the **International Chess Federation (FIDE)**.
- This tournament is distinct from the **Women's World Chess Championship**, although both are conducted under the aegis of FIDE.
 - **FIDE** serves as the global governing body for the sport of chess and is responsible for regulating all international chess competitions. While it was originally founded in **1924 in Paris**, FIDE currently has its headquarters in **Lausanne, Switzerland**.
- The tournament holds significant importance in the women's championship cycle. The **top three finishers** of the FIDE Women's World Cup 2025 will earn a place in the **2026 Women's Candidates Tournament**.

Appointment of State DGPs


News: The Union Government has notified a Single Window System for appointing State Director-General of Police/Head of Police Force.

About Appointment of State DGPs

How to select DGP

The Supreme Court has issued seven directives to be followed by the States when appointing the Director General of Police

- Proposals should be sent to the UPSC, three months before incumbent's retirement
- UPSC to prepare a panel of names as per Prakash Singh judgment. It should try and choose within the zone of consideration who have got two years of service
- States shall appoint one of the panel's choices
- States shall not appoint DGP on an 'acting basis'
- The selected person can continue despite his date of superannuation, but the extension should be reasonable
- Appointing persons on their retirement day is not in conformity with the Prakash Singh verdict
- State's and Centre's rules running counter to the SC directions will remain in abeyance



OLD RULE (AS PER PRAKASH SINGH JUDGMENT OF 2006)

- DGP shall be selected by the State government from among three senior-most officers of the department empanelled for promotion

- The promotion should be based on their length of service, very good record and range of experience for heading the police force

- Once the officer is selected for the job, he or she should have a minimum tenure of at least two years irrespective of their date of superannuation

Source – TH

- Director-General of Police (DGP):** In India, the DGP is the **highest-ranking police officer in a state** or union territory, and is also known as the State Police Chief.

Procedure followed in the appointment of State DGPs

- UPSC had framed **guidelines** for the appointment to the post of State DGPs in 2009 (amended in 2023).
 - These guidelines were made on the basis of the Supreme Court judgment on police reforms in **Prakash Singh vs Union of India (2006)**.
- According to these guidelines:
 - States must provide the UPSC with a **list of officers eligible for consideration**.
 - A **single-window system** launched recently by the government for this purpose.
 - It comprises a detailed check list and standard easy- to-use formats for the States to send proposals, facilitating smooth and expeditious empanelment by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
 - Officers must have a **minimum of 30 years of service**. Information required to be sent to UPSC include service records, performance appraisals and vigilance clearance.
 - Eligible officers should hold the rank of Additional Director General (ADG) or the rank of police chief or one rank below, as specified by the state.
 - This list must **reach the UPSC six months** before the incumbent Director General of Police (DGP) is set to retire.
 - The committee, **chaired by the UPSC Chairman** and consisting of the Union Home Secretary, State Chief Secretary, State DGP, and a Central Police Organization Chief will select three officers based on merit.
 - After this, the state has to immediately appoint one of the persons from the panel prepared by the UPSC.
- Amendments made by the UPSC in 2023 to its 2009 guidelines

Specification	Details
Minimum Service Left	Only police officers with at least six months of service left before retirement will be considered for appointment as the DGPs.

Central Deputation	If an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer is serving on a central deputation and the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informs the respective State government that it cannot relieve the officer, that individual will not be considered for the position of DGP.
Experience required	The previous requirement of 30 years of service for DGP eligibility has been reduced to 25 years.
Shortlisted officers	The number of shortlisted officers cannot exceed three, but may consist of less than three officers in “exceptional circumstances”.
Willingness of officers	Officers will not be included in the shortlisted list unless they themselves are willing.

Harappan Site of Ratadiya Ri Dheri

News: A Harappan site has surfaced at Ratadiya Ri Dheri in Jaisalmer district, marking the first known Indus Valley settlement in Rajasthan’s arid region.

About Harappan Site of Ratadiya Ri Dheri



Figure 7. Source – Tol

- **Location:** It is located **60 km from Ramgarh tehsil** and just 17 km northwest of Pakistan’s Sadewala in **Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan**.
- **Dating of site:** Archaeologists date the settlement to the **mature urban phase** of the Indus Valley civilization i.e. **2600 to 1900 BCE**.
- **Importance of site:**
 - This is **first-of-its-kind Harappan site** in the remote **sands of the Thar Desert**.
 - Until now, **Pilibanga in northern Rajasthan** was the state’s **most prominent Harappan site**, discovered by Italian Indologist **Luigi Pio Tessitori** in the early 20th century.
 - This spot **connects** the dots between older Harappan sites in northern **Rajasthan and Gujarat**, filling a big gap on the **archeological map**.
 - It **backs up theories** that changing **rivers**—and disappearing water sources—shaped where people could live back then.
- **Findings**

- A large quantity of **fragmented pottery** is scattered across the site, including **red ware, slipped red ware, bowls, jars, and perforated vessels**.

- **Stone blades** (8–10 cm) likely **made from chert** sourced from Rohri, Pakistan
- Terracotta cakes, grinding stones, clay and shell bangles, and other urban artifacts
- A **kiln structure** is discovered on the site's southern slope, **featuring a central column**—similar to kilns found at **Kanmer (Gujarat) and Mohenjo-daro**.
- The **wedge-shaped bricks** are also unearthed, which likely served in **constructing circular walls and kilns**, along with typical Harappan-style bricks.

Setubandha Scholar Scheme

News: The Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Central Sanskrit University, has launched the Setubandha Scholar Scheme.

About Setubandha Scholar Scheme



Figure 8. Source – MoE

- The scheme empowers **scholars of traditional Gurukul education** to join top academic institutes like **IITs without formal degrees**.
- **Aim:** It aims to **bridge** India's age-old gurukul tradition with modern scientific and academic inquiry.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Education
- **Implementing agency:** Indian Knowledge System

(IKS) Division at Central Sanskrit University

- **Beneficiaries**
 - The **Gurukul scholars** who've **completed at least 5 years at recognised institutions** and showcase **expertise** in Sanskrit, Ayurveda, philosophy, mathematics or classical studies are eligible.
- **Eligibility criteria**
 - **Maximum** age: 32 years
 - **Minimum 5 years** of study under a traditional Guru or in a Gurukul
 - No formal degree required
 - Must demonstrate excellence in traditional or classical knowledge
 - Applications open until August 15, 2025
- **Features of scheme**
 - It **aligns** with the **National Education Policy 2020** that promotes integrating India's civilisational wisdom into the formal education system.
 - **Fellowships:** The scheme offers **two fellowship categories**:
 - **Category 1** (Postgraduate level): ₹40,000/month + ₹1 lakh annual grant
 - **Category 2** (Doctoral level): ₹65,000/month + ₹2 lakh annual grant

- **Domains covered**

- The programme encourages exploration in **areas** like Anvikshiki Vidya (philosophy and cognitive sciences), Ganit-Bhaut-Jyotish Vidya (mathematics, physics, astronomy), and Bhaishajya Vidya (Ayurveda).

Skill Impact Bond (SIB)

News: Women are leading the way in India's first outcome-based Skill Impact Bond (SIB) initiative.

About Skill Impact Bond (SIB)

- The Skill Impact Bond (SIB) is **India's first outcome-based skilling initiative**.
- **Launched:** 2021 by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- The initiative is a collaborative effort between the public, private, and philanthropic sectors and supported by a consortium that includes the **British Asian Trust, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), JSW Foundation, HSBC India, and Dubai Cares**.
- **Aim:** To train 50,000 youth across India, with a target of at least 30,150 individuals being retained in jobs for a minimum duration of three months.
- The initiative places a **strong emphasis on inclusion, particularly in creating economic opportunities for women and marginalized communities**.
- **Feature:** One of the most notable features of the SIB is its **outcome-based financing model, where** instead of funding being tied to enrolment or certification, it is linked to job placement and retention outcomes.
 - Training providers are incentivized to ensure long-term success by offering onboarding support, counselling, and continued engagement with alumni.
 - This model shifts the focus from inputs and outputs to actual, measurable impact.
- **Significance:** The Skill Impact Bond is transforming lives by **instilling confidence, fostering identity, and giving young people**, especially women.
- **Status:** As of now, over **23,700 youth have been trained through the SIB**, with women accounting for **approximately 72% of the beneficiaries**.
 - Training has been provided in **30 job roles across 13 sectors**, involving more than 700 employers.
 - **75% of trained individuals have secured employment**, and **60% have remained in their jobs beyond three months**, surpassing national retention averages.

How Earthquake Causes a Tsunami

News: Recently, a massive **magnitude 8.8 earthquake** struck off the coast of **Russia's Far Eastern Kamchatka Peninsula**, triggering **tsunami waves as high as 16 feet**.

About Tsunami

- A tsunami is a series of big waves caused by something that suddenly moves a large amount of water in the ocean—like an earthquake.
- Most tsunamis happen when an earthquake occurs under the ocean, or very close to the coast.
- When the sea floor shakes, it can push a lot of water up or down very suddenly. This movement starts the tsunami waves.

What Kind of Earthquake Causes a Tsunami?

- **Depth of the Earthquake:**

- If the earthquake is **shallow** (close to the surface, between 0 and 70 km deep), it is more likely to cause a tsunami.
- Shallow quakes keep more of their energy and can move the sea floor a lot.
- **Deep earthquakes** (below 70 km) lose energy before reaching the sea floor, so they don't usually cause tsunamis.

- **Type of Movement:**

- Earthquakes caused by **reverse faulting** (where one part of the Earth's crust moves up over another) can push the sea floor **up or down**.
- This vertical movement moves a **huge amount of water**, starting tsunami waves.
- This usually happens in **subduction zones**, where one tectonic plate slides under another.

- **Magnitude (Strength):**

- Tsunamis are mostly caused by **strong earthquakes** — magnitude **7.0 or higher**.
- The **biggest and most dangerous tsunamis** come from earthquakes above **8.0**.
- Stronger earthquakes release more energy, so they move the sea floor more and create **larger waves**.

Where do these earthquakes happen often?

- Tsunami-causing earthquakes mostly happen at **tectonic plate boundaries**, especially at **convergent boundaries** (where one plate goes under another).
- Example: The **Kuril-Kamchatka Trench** near **Russia** is a dangerous area. There, the **Pacific Plate** is being pushed under the **Okhotsk Plate**, making it prone to big earthquakes and tsunamis.