

Factly Weekly

Compilation

2025

**For UPSC CSE Prelims
Exam**

3rd Week

October 2025

INDEX

National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2025	2
Exercise Samudra Shakti 2025	2
Forest Declaration Assessment 2025	3
Google's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hub	5
Mini Warm Pool (MWP)	6
Prussian Blue Capsules	7
State Mining Readiness Index	7
Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS)	8
Venezuela.....	10
Google's Cell2Sentence-Scale 27B (C2S-Scale)	10
The Arctic Circle Assembly (ACA) 2025	11
State of Finance for Forests (SFF) 2025	12
Key Fact about Sri Lanka.....	14
Motion 042.....	15
Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA)	16
Operation Fire Trail	17
Zombie Deer Disease	18
Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary	19
Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025	19
'We Rise' Initiative	20
Iceland	21
Kolam Tribe.....	22
Sevilla Forum on Debt	23
Financial Action Task Force (FATF)	24
Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JAIMEX) - 2025	25

National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2025

News: BEE invited applications for the 35th National Energy Conservation Awards 2025; awards to be presented on 14 December 2025 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

About National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2025

Bureau of Energy Efficiency Introduces NECA 2025 Awards



Figure 1. Source – BEE

- It is a **prestigious national platform** that recognizes **excellence, innovation, and leadership in energy efficiency and conservation**.
- It was **instituted in 1991** by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** and now in its **35th edition** (in 2025).
- **Aim:** To recognize and **honour entities that reduce energy consumption** while maintaining or enhancing operational **efficiency**.
- **Administering Body:** The **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**, under the **Ministry of Power**.
- **Frequency:** The awards are presented **every year on December 14**, observed as **National Energy Conservation Day**.
- **Award Categories**
 - It **includes**– Industries; Transport; Buildings; Institutions; Energy-Efficient Appliances; Energy

Efficiency Innovation.

- **New category: Digital Content Creators and Influencers** aligned with **Mission LiFE**.

- **Purpose :** To inspire wider **adoption of energy-efficient technologies** and practices through recognition and competitive spirit.

About Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)

- The Government of India established BEE on **March 1, 2002** under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001**.
- **Mission:** Its mission is to **assist in policies and strategies** rooted in **self-regulation and market principles** to **reduce the energy intensity** of the economy.
- BEE coordinates with designated consumers, designated agencies, and other organizations, recognizing and utilizing existing resources to perform its functions.
- The Act provides **both regulatory and promotional roles for BEE**.

Exercise Samudra Shakti 2025

News: The Indian Navy is hosting the **fifth edition** of the Indo-Indonesian maritime exercise 'Samudra Shakti – 2025' at Visakhapatnam from 14–17 October 2025.

About Exercise Samudra Shakti 2025



Source – PIB

- It is a **Bilateral Joint Maritime Exercise** between **Indo-Indonesia**.
- It is the **fifth edition** of the Exercise in 2025.
- **Aim:** It aims to **enhance interoperability, strengthen mutual understanding, and share best practices** between the two navies for Indo-Pacific stability and peace.
- **Phases:** It is conducted in **two phases** – harbour phase and sea phase – to deepen naval cooperation.
- **Hosted by:** The exercise was launched and hosted by the **Indian Navy** under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.
- **Held at:** The exercise is being held at **Visakhapatnam** under the Eastern Naval Command.
- **Participating units:**
 - **INS Kavaratti:** An **Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette** of the Eastern Fleet under the Eastern Naval Command.
 - **KRI John Lie:** An **Indonesian Navy corvette** with an integral helicopter, which arrived at Visakhapatnam to a warm welcome by the Eastern Naval Command.

Forest Declaration Assessment 2025

News: The 2025 Forest Declaration Assessment warns 2024 losses keep the world far off halting deforestation and restoring ecosystems by 2030.

About Forest Declaration Assessment 2025



Source – FDA

- **Forest Declaration Assessment** is an **annual**, researched and peer-reviewed progress assessment on **global forests, covering deforestation, degradation, restoration, biodiversity, finance, rights, and governance**.
- **Published by:** Forest Declaration Assessment (coordinated by Climate Focus)
- **Established as:** New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) Progress Assessment
- **Launched at:** It was launched to track progress toward the NYDF's 10 voluntary goals **adopted at the 2014 UN Climate Summit**.
- **Established in:** It was established in **2015**.
- **Present name:** In 2022, the name changed to **Forest Declaration Assessment**.
- **Endorsements:** **Russia, China, India and South Africa** has **not** yet endorsed the NYDF.

Key Findings

- **Scale and trajectory**
 - 8.1 million hectares of forest were lost in 2024; the world is **63% off track** to halt deforestation by 2030.
 - Tropical forests were worst hit, with **6.73 million hectares** lost in 2024.
- **Degradation and restoration**
 - Forest degradation affected **8.8 million hectares** in 2024.
 - Restoration projects cover **10.6 million hectares** (about **5.4%** of global reforestation potential and **0.3%** of global biophysical forest restoration potential); data remain fragmented.
- **Finance action**
 - International public finance for forests has increased to about **\$5.7–\$5.9 billion per year**,
 - To meet the **2030 goals**, the report estimates that the **world needs between \$117 billion and \$299 billion in financing**.
- **Drivers of forest loss:**

Created with love ❤ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.
Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.

- **Permanent agriculture:** It accounts for about **86%** of global deforestation over the last decade.
- **Fire:** It is a major cause of loss in 2024 (linked to **land clearing, climate-change-induced drought, and limited law enforcement**).
- **Commodity demand:** Rising demand for **soy, beef, timber, coal, and metals** drives clearance.
- **Mining expansion:** **Gold and coal mining** are growing sources of deforestation.
- **Logging and monocrops:** Expansion supported by subsidies contributes to forest clearance.
- **Misaligned incentives:** Large **agricultural subsidies** (~\$409 billion annually) outweigh limited forest finance (~\$5.7–\$5.9 billion), encouraging deforestation.
- **Weak enforcement:** Limited law enforcement enables illegal burning and clearing.
- **Limited rights and participation:** Restricted roles for **Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and civil society** undermine conservation.
- **Industry dominance:** Political and economic power of industry in many countries leads to policies that allow deforestation and degradation.

Google's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hub

News: **Google** has announced a **\$15 billion investment** over the next **five years** (2026–2030) to establish an **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Centre** in **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**. This marks **Google's biggest investment in India** to date.

About Google's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hub



Figure 2. Source – NDTV

- **Developed by:** Google in partnership with the Adani Group and Airtel
- **Location:** Visakhapatnam, a port city on India's eastern coast.
- **Aim:** To create **state-of-the-art data centres**, renewable energy systems, and high-speed fibre networks that will power next-generation AI applications.
- It will be a part of **Google's global network of AI data centres** operating across **12 countries**.
- **Features of the Artificial Intelligence**

(AI)Hub:

- The AI hub will **serve as a central ecosystem for developing, training, and managing advanced AI models**.
- It will **support innovations across multiple industries**, from cloud computing and automation to education and healthcare.
- At the core of the AI hub will be **large-scale data centres** which are advanced facilities designed to **store and process enormous volumes of data at high speed**.
- **These data centres** are designed to handle **massive data processing** using **GPU-powered servers**, enabling **AI training, image/video generation, and generative AI models**.

- It includes the **construction of a new international subsea gateway** and **multiple undersea cables** landing in Visakhapatnam, linking to **Google's global network (over 2 million miles of terrestrial and subsea cables)**.
- AI centres are **more energy-intensive**, requiring **advanced cooling systems and stronger power infrastructure**.
- **Economic Impact:** The AI Hub will-
 - Generate at least **\$15 billion in new economic activity** over five years (2026–2030).
 - Contribute significantly to **U.S. GDP** through collaboration and innovation.
 - Create **economic and societal opportunities** for both **India and the U.S.**
 - The project will **create around 1.88 lakh (188,000) direct and indirect jobs** in the state.

Mini Warm Pool (MWP)

News: A new study has revealed how a small warm patch of water in the southeastern Arabian Sea, known as the Mini Warm Pool (MWP), helps the Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM) recover from the disruptive effects of El Niño.

About Mini Warm Pool (MWP)



Figure 3. Source – DTE

- It is a **small region of unusually warm sea surface water** in the **southeastern Arabian Sea**, near the **Kerala coast**.
- It forms **every year in April–May**, just before the onset of the **Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM)**.
- **Temperature:** The **sea surface temperature (SST)** in the MWP area often exceeds **30°C**, making it the **warmest region** in the Arabian Sea during pre-monsoon months.
- **Year-to-Year Variability:** The **strength and extent** of the MWP vary annually, sometimes **strong and widespread**, other times **weak or absent**. Its variability is influenced by **large-scale climate patterns**, especially **El Niño**.
- **Role in Monsoon Onset:** The MWP induces **local atmospheric convection**, helping to **draw southwesterly monsoon winds** toward the Kerala coast. It acts as a **precursor** that helps **initiate** the Indian Summer Monsoon.
- **Link with El Niño and the Indian Ocean Capacitor Effect**
 - **El Niño** peaks in the **Pacific Ocean (Nov–Jan)** but impacts the **Indian Ocean** after a **delay of 4–5 months**. This delayed influence is known as the **Indian Ocean Capacitor Effect** where the Indian Ocean “stores” El Niño’s energy and “releases” it later.
 - The **anomalous easterly winds** generated by this effect reduce surface cooling in the southeastern Arabian Sea, **intensifying the MWP**.
 - These **easterly winds** tend to **delay** the overall monsoon onset.
 - However, the **stronger MWP** generated by the same winds creates **local low pressure**, pulling moisture-laden air toward Kerala and **helping restore the monsoon’s timing**.

- The MWP acts as a “self-correcting” system. It mitigates El Niño’s delaying impact on the Indian monsoon
- **Importance for Forecasting**
 - **Monitoring the MWP** can **reduce uncertainty** in monsoon prediction and **improve seasonal forecasts**.
 - Better forecasts benefit **farmers, policymakers, and water resource managers**.
 - The MWP demonstrates the **tight coupling** between the **Pacific and Indian Oceans**.
 - It highlights how **small oceanic features** can influence **continental-scale weather** and **livelihoods of over a billion people**.

Prussian Blue Capsules

News: India delivered Prussian Blue capsules to Indonesia after authorities detected Cesium-137 contamination in exports and facilities, following a request from Indonesia’s Health Ministry.

About Prussian Blue Capsules



Figure 4. Source – CDC

- Prussian (or potassium ferric hexacyanoferrate) blue is a **pill** that may be used in a radiation emergency to **help remove radioactive cesium (Cs) and thallium (Tl) from inside a person’s body**.
- Prussian blue **traps radioactive cesium and thallium in the intestines** and keeps them from **being reabsorbed by the body**.
- The radioactive materials then **move through the intestines** and are passed (excreted) in bowel movements.
- Because Prussian blue reduces the time that radioactive cesium and thallium stay in the body, it **helps limit the amount of time the body is exposed to radiation**.
- It is one of the critical medicines listed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for radiological and nuclear emergencies.
- In India, this drug has been developed by the industry based on the technology of **Institute of Nuclear Medicine & Allied Sciences (INMAS), Delhi**, a laboratory of Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO).

About Cesium-137

- Cesium-137 is a **radioactive isotope** produced during **nuclear reactions** and **used in industrial, medical, and research applications**.
- The **long-term exposure** to Cesium-137, even at **low levels**, can **increase the risk of cancer**.

State Mining Readiness Index

News: The Ministry of Mines released the State Mining Readiness Index and State rankings, fulfilling a Union Budget 2025–26 announcement to promote State-level mining reforms.



About State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI)

- The State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI) is a **benchmarking tool** that evaluates **States' readiness and efficiency** in facilitating **non-coal mineral mining reforms**.

- **Released by:** It is published by the **Ministry of Mines**.

- **Performance indicators:** The index comprises indicators that **reflect State performance in the mining sector**, including:

- Auction performance
- Early mine operationalization
- Thrust on exploration.
- Sustainable mining practices pertaining to non-coal minerals.

- **Aim:** The SMRI **aims** to benchmark State performance and encourage healthy competition to accelerate mining reforms and

sustainable resource management.

- **Key feature**

- It serves as a **tool for benchmarking readiness and efficiency** at the State level.
- It **encourages healthy competition** among States to improve mining governance and outcomes.
- States were grouped into three categories on the basis of their mineral endowment.

State Rankings

Category	Top three States
Category A	Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat
Category B	Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Assam
Category C	Punjab, Uttarakhand, Tripura

Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS)

News: On 15 October 2025 at Hampi, Karnataka, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman interacted with interns of the Prime Minister Internship Scheme.

About Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS)



Source – MoCA

- It provides **12-month internships** in India's **top 500 companies** to bridge academic learning and real-world experience and enhance youth employability.
- **Nodal Ministry:** It is implemented by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- **Aim:** It aims to provide **12-month internship** opportunities to **one crore youth aged 21–24 years** in the **country's top 500 companies over five years**.
- **Purpose:** It seeks to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry needs by **enabling 12-month exposure** to real business environments, training, and skill development that enhances employability.
- **Eligibility**
 - Applicants must be Indian citizens **aged 21–24 years**.
 - They must have at least secondary education; ITI certificates, polytechnic diplomas, or graduation degrees are acceptable.
 - The scheme targets youth from low-income households (family's annual income should be less than Rs. 8 lakh.)
 - Individuals not eligible for this scheme including
 - Graduates from IITs, IIMs, National Law Universities, IISERs, NID, and IIIT, as well as degree holders like CA, CMA, CS, MBBS, BDS, MBA, or master's degree holders.
 - Candidates who have already participated in a government internship or apprenticeship or
 - Whose parents are permanent employees of the government also cannot benefit from this scheme.
- **Key feature**
 - The Scheme is **separate from all the existing schemes** related to skill development, apprenticeships, internship and student training programmes, etc. being implemented across all the States & UTs of India, and will run independently of all such Central/State schemes.
 - **Monthly stipend is ₹5,000: ₹4,500 via Direct Benefit Transfer** from the government and ₹500 from participating companies **through CSR funds**.
 - **A one-time joining grant of ₹6,000 is** provided to each intern.
 - These internships span **24 sectors**, including oil, gas, energy, travel, hospitality, automotive, banking, and financial services.
 - All interns are covered under government insurance schemes, including **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana**.

Venezuela

News: Recently, U.S. President Donald Trump indicated that he had authorised covert CIA action against Venezuela.

About Venezuela



Figure 5. Source: World Atlas

- **Location:** Venezuela is situated at the northern tip of South America.
- **Borders:** It is bordered by the **Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean** to the **north**, **Guyana** to the **east**, **Brazil** to the **south**, and **Colombia** to the **southwest and west**.
- **Capital:** Its capital is **Caracas**.
- **Geography:** Venezuela has diverse regions such as **coastal plains**, the **Andean highlands**, **Llanos**, and the **Guiana Highlands**.
 - It includes the **Andes Mountains**, **Llanos (plains)**, **Lake Maracaibo**, and **Angel Falls (the world's highest waterfall)**.
- **Natural Features:** The **Guiana Highlands** are home to **tepuis (tabletop mountains)**, including **Mount Roraima**, while the **Orinoco River and Lake Maracaibo** dominate the country's drainage system.
- **Economy:** Venezuela possesses the **world's largest known oil reserves**, which has been a major driver of its economy.

- **Flora:** Venezuela's flora includes **tropical and semideciduous forests**, with distinct vegetation types and **tropical rainforest in the Maracaibo basin**.
- **Conservation:** Venezuela has numerous national parks, including **Canaima National Park (UNESCO World Heritage site)** and **Los Roques National Park**.

Google's Cell2Sentence-Scale 27B (C2S-Scale)

Context: Google DeepMind and Google Research unveiled a new AI foundation model, named Cell2Sentence-Scale 27B (C2S-Scale).

About Google's Cell2Sentence-Scale 27B (C2S-Scale)



Source – IE

- **Developed by:** The C2S-Scale is an advanced artificial intelligence (AI) model developed by Google DeepMind and Google Research in collaboration with Yale University and based on the Gemma framework.
- It is a **27-billion-parameter foundation model** that is specifically designed to **understand the “language” of individual cells within the body.**
 - This enables it to **simulate and predict cellular behavior** under various conditions, such as in diseases like cancer.
- **C2S-Scale can generate insights that were previously unrecognized by understanding how individual cells react and interact.**
 - This allows researchers to **explore new pathways in drug discovery and disease treatment.**
- **Working mechanism**
 - The model was trained using **large data sets to identify patterns in cell behavior**, especially under conditions **where immune system responses are low (low levels of interferons)**, such as in early-stage cancer.
 - By analyzing this data, **C2S-Scale can generate hypotheses about cellular behavior and suggest potential drug combinations** that could trigger immune responses in tumors that are typically hidden from the immune system.
 - This development marks a significant milestone in medical research **by generating new scientific hypotheses, bridging computational predictions with experimental validation.**

The Arctic Circle Assembly (ACA) 2025

News: India’s Ministry of Ayush delegation participated in the 2025 Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavík, where Prof. R.N. Acharya presented India’s Arctic Policy and Ayush relevance.

About The Arctic Circle Assembly (ACA)



Source – PIB

- The Arctic Circle Assembly is the **largest gathering on Arctic affairs**.
- It focuses on the future of the Arctic and our planet.
- The **annual** Arctic Circle Assembly convenes every October.
- It **brings together** governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and other stakeholders to foster international engagement, cooperation, and celebration of the Arctic.

About The Arctic Circle Assembly (ACA) 2025

- It is organized by **Arctic Circle**
- It was held on **October 16-18, 2025**
- **Venue** : in **Reykjavík, Iceland**.
- **Aim**: Its aim is to provide the **world's largest open forum for dialogue and cooperation on Arctic affairs**, bringing together governments, Indigenous leaders, researchers, business, and civil society.
- The **2025 edition** continues the **Assembly's "open tent" dialogue** format to share knowledge and shape cooperation on climate, development, and security in the High North.

About Arctic Circle

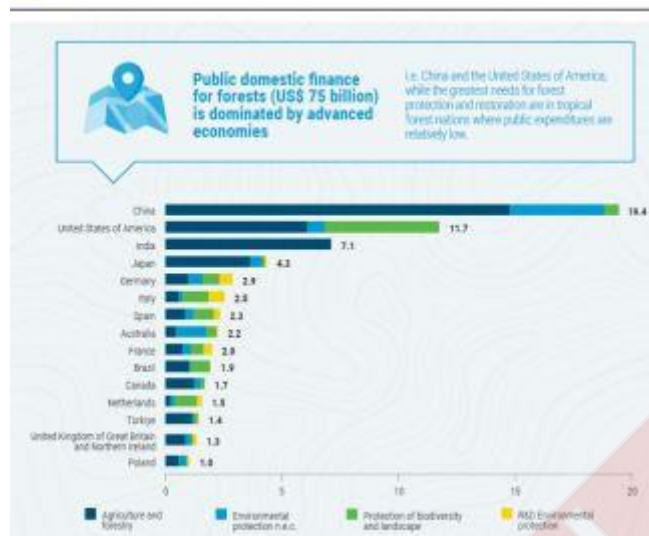
- **Location**: The Arctic Circle is the latitude **66°33' N** that encircles the **Arctic Ocean**.
- It spans **eight "Arctic states"**: **Canada, the United States (Alaska), Russia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark** (via Greenland).
- Key governance is coordinated by the **Arctic Council** (with Indigenous Permanent Participants), which addresses environment, sustainable development, and cooperation (not military issues).
- Its significance is rising due to **rapid warming (Arctic amplification), sea-ice loss, permafrost thaw, biodiversity change, and community risks**.
- It also draws interest for **new shipping routes, critical minerals, fisheries, and geopolitics**, prompting more science, diplomacy, and regulation.

State of Finance for Forests (SFF) 2025

News: UNEP's State of Finance for Forests 2025 sets a new 2023 finance baseline and urges a rapid scaling of funds to meet 2030 and 2050 targets.

About State of Finance for Forests (SFF) 2025

Figure 2.2. Countries with highest public domestic expenditure on forests in 2023 (2024 US\$ billion)



Source – UNEP

- It presents a **global overview of 2023 public and private finance for forests**, quantifies investment needs to **2030 and 2050**, and highlights the finance **gap and harmful flows**.
- It ties forest finance to **Rio Convention-aligned climate, biodiversity, and restoration goals**.
- **Launched by:** United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Key findings in SFF 2025

- **Major trends**
 - Forest finance in 2023 totaled **US\$84 billion**: **91% public (US\$77b)** and **9% private (US\$7.5b)**; domestic public spending (~US\$75b) dominates.
 - Investment needs rise to **US\$300b by 2030** and **US\$498b by 2050**; the **gap is ~US\$216b/year to 2030**.
 - Expanding nature-based solutions (NbS) by nearly 1 billion hectares by 2030 will be essential to meeting the Rio Convention goals.
- **Positive outlook**
 - **Private financing is growing steadily through:** Certified commodity supply chains (39 %), Impact investing (23 %).
 - Meanwhile, carbon markets and emerging biodiversity credit/offset systems are establishing themselves as key investable asset classes.
 - On the public side, **roughly 80 % of international forest funding still comes as concessional Official Development Assistance (ODA)**, aligned with hybrid climate-biodiversity strategies and supporting the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) “30 by 30” target — protecting 30 % of land and sea by 2030**.
- **Challenges**
 - **Environmentally harmful subsidies and finance:** around USD 406 billion in agricultural subsidies and USD 8.9 trillion (2024) in private credit to high-deforestation-risk firms.
 - **Geographic inequality:** Of the USD 75 billion in domestic public spending, only USD 12.9 billion (17 %) occurred across 31 tropical forest countries, even though they house most remaining global forest reserves.

- **Inclusion shortfalls:** Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPs/LCs) received just USD 362 million in international public forest finance (2023), with minimal direct channeling to IP/LC-led initiatives.

INDIA Specific Findings

- **High domestic commitment:** India's **public domestic expenditure is ~US\$7.1b (2023)**, placing it among the **highest-spending countries**.
- **International inflows:** India is listed among recipients of **public international forest finance (~US\$81m in 2023)** within Asia's allocation.
- **Tropical context:** In 2023, governments worldwide spent about **US\$75 billion** of domestic public money on forests, but **31 tropical forest countries** together managed only **US\$12.9 billion (17%)**. **India alone spent around US\$7.1 billion**, showing strong domestic commitment.

Major Recommendations

- **Scale total investments fast** to close the **~US\$216b/year** gap to 2030 and expand forest Nature-based Solutions toward the **1 billion ha** 2030 need.
- **Mobilize and de-risk private capital:** Strengthen enabling conditions — land tenure security, financial access, safeguards, and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) — to support JREDD+ and related pipelines.
- **Diversify financial instruments:** Deploy green/blended finance, high-integrity carbon markets (including Article 6 mechanisms), and biodiversity credit systems. Leverage IDA, IBRD, EU Institutions, GCF, and GEF channels.
- **Redirect harmful flows** by reforming **agricultural subsidies** and tightening regulation of **deforestation-risk finance**.
- **Promote inclusive, gender-responsive finance** with **direct channels to IPs/LCs**, strengthening equity and local capacity.

Key Fact about Sri Lanka

News: NITI Aayog hosted the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Dr. Harini Nireka Amarasuriya, in New Delhi.

Key Fact about Sri Lanka



Figure 6. Source: Britannica

- **Location:** Sri Lanka is an island nation located in the **Indian Ocean**.
- It is **separated from the Indian subcontinent** by the **Palk Strait**.
- **Capital cities:** **Colombo** and **Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte**
- **Major ethnic groups:** Sinhalese, Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils, and Muslims.
- **Official languages:** Sinhala and Tamil
- **Geography:** The highest mountains in Sri Lanka, including **Pidurutalagala** (2,524 meters), **Kirigalpotta** (2,396 meters), and **Adam's Peak** (2,300 meters), are located in the **Central Highlands**.

- **Climate:** Sri Lanka has a **tropical climate** with **high temperatures** year-round

- **Economy:** The economy of Sri Lanka was historically based on **plantation agriculture**, with **tea, rubber, and coconut** being the major export crops. **Tourism** has also become an important sector.
- **Resources:** **Graphite, gemstones, and ilmenite** are some of the key mineral exports.
- **Vegetation:** **One-third of Sri Lanka's land area** is covered by natural vegetation, mainly **forests**. The **Wet Zone** is home to **tropical wet evergreen forests**, while the **Dry Zone** has **dry evergreen and deciduous forests**.
- **Fauna:** Sri Lanka hosts approximately **123 mammal species, including endangered ones** like the **Sri Lankan elephant, leopard, and purple-faced langur**. Other notable species include the **toque macaque, sloth bear, and red slender loris**.

Motion 042

News: Recently, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has adopted Motion 042, becoming the first multilateral organisation to directly recognise fossil fuel production as a threat to nature.

About Motion 042



Figure 7. Source: DTE

- **Adopted by:** International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on October 16
- The motion was passed during the **IUCN World Conservation Congress**.
- **Tabled by:** World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- **Co-sponsored by:** BirdLife International, the Coordinadora de la Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).
- IUCN became the **first multilateral body** to explicitly recognize fossil fuel production as a threat to nature.
- It urges governments and civil society **to address the root causes of the interconnected climate and biodiversity crises by focusing on supply-side measures**.
- Motion 042 urges states to **phase out coal, oil, and gas; halt new extraction projects; and ensure a just transition for workers and communities**.
- It also encourages exploration of new international instruments **to address critical gap in global governance on fossil fuel supply**. (including potential Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty)
- It **prioritise ecosystem protection** at the source of extraction and opposing new fossil fuel expansion.
- **Linked Motions:**
 - **Motion 038:** Calls for implementation of the Paris Agreement's goals and a **"just, orderly and equitable"** fossil fuel transition.
 - **Motion 141:** Welcomes the **ICJ advisory opinion** affirming states' **legal obligations to prevent climate harm and protect intergenerational rights**.

Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA)

News: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has launched the Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA) to foster innovation and collaboration in the digital identity domain.

About Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA)



Source – BT

About	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is designed to advance India's digital identity ecosystem through collaboration with startups, academia, and industry.It aligns with achieving national priorities of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Digital Public Infrastructure, ensuring a pipeline of secure, scalable, and future-ready identity solutions.
Launched by	Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)
Collaboration by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MeitY Startup Hub (MSH): Provides technical mentoring, incubation, and accelerator support.NASSCOM: Offers industry connections, global outreach, and entrepreneurial support.
Aim	To promote indigenous, AI-driven solutions that enhance the security, scalability, and resilience of Aadhaar authentication.

Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SITAA focuses on developing advanced technologies such as real-time deepfake detection, AI-powered face liveness systems, and contactless fingerprint authentication. Focus area: The key focus areas, among others, encompass biometric technologies, authentication frameworks, data privacy and protection, artificial intelligence, and secure digital identity applications. The program will launch with a pilot featuring initial challenges for startups, academia, and industry partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three core challenges are: Face Liveness Detection, Presentation Attack Detection and Contactless Fingerprint Authentication Eligible entities with innovative solutions are invited to apply by 15th November 2025.
Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SITAA pilot will enable innovators to translate ideas into practical, scalable solutions that enhance the security, reliability, and efficiency of India's digital identity framework. By encouraging cutting-edge research and technology development, the program positions India at the forefront of global digital identity innovation. It empowers startups, academia, and industry to contribute towards a future-ready, self-reliant, and secure digital identity ecosystem.

Operation Fire Trail

News: Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), under ongoing "Operation Fire Trail," intercepted Chinese-origin firecrackers at Nhava Sheva and Tuticorin, seizing contraband worth over ₹9.8 crore and making arrests.

About Operation Fire Trail

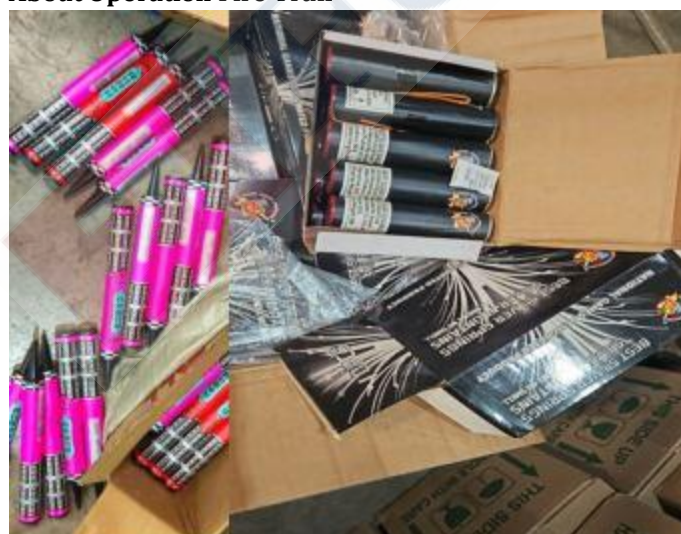


Figure 8. Source – PIB

- It is an ongoing **DRI nationwide anti-smuggling initiative** to detect and **stop illegal import of fireworks and firecrackers** concealed or mis-declared in cargo.
- Launched by:** It is conducted by the **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI).**
 - It is India's premier enforcement agency **under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).**
- Ministry involved:** The operations are supported through an official release from the **Ministry of Finance.**

- **Aim:** It aims to safeguard the public and the trade ecosystem by detecting and dismantling organized smuggling networks of hazardous contraband.
- **Legality:** Import of firecrackers is '**Restricted**' under the ITC (HS) of the Foreign Trade Policy and needs valid licenses from DGFT and PESO under the Explosives Rules, 2008.

Zombie Deer Disease

News: Health officials in Florida have confirmed cases of Chronic Wasting Disease, commonly known as "Zombie Deer Disease."

About Zombie Deer Disease

Source – CDC

- It is a fatal **neurological illness of cervids** caused by **abnormal prion proteins** that damage the **brain and nervous system**.
- **Other name:** It is also known as **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**.
- **Cause:** It is caused by **abnormal prion proteins** that **damage the brain and nervous system** of infected animals.
 - A **prion** is a **misfolded protein** that induces misfolding in normal variants of the same protein, leading to cellular death.
 - Unlike other infectious agents such as viruses, bacteria, and fungi, prions do not contain **nucleic acids (DNA or RNA)**. Prions are mainly twisted **isoforms** of the **major prion protein (PrP)**, a naturally occurring protein with an uncertain function.
- **Symptoms:** Infected animals exhibit symptoms like weight loss, stumbling, a lack of coordination, drooling, and aggression.
- **Transmission:** Deer, elk, and moose can contract CWD from one another directly or by interaction with prions-contaminated surroundings.
 - Infection would likely occur through: food, other consumable products harvested from deer, moose, elk, caribou or reindeer (for example elk antler velvet)
 - Soil and vegetation can be contaminated by urine, feces, or carcasses.
 - Prions can remain infectious in the environment for years.
- **Human risk:** There has been **no known transmission of CWD to humans**.
- **Treatment:** **No treatment or vaccine exists**; researchers are working on better detection, vaccines, and environmental controls.
- **Diagnosis:** CWD can be confirmed **only by testing specific tissues from an animal after it has died**.
 - Detecting the disease is **unreliable** in animals that are younger than 12 months.
 - There is **no test** that can certify food or other animal products as completely free of CWD prions.
- **Prevention:**
 - Wear gloves when handling ill or dead animals; avoid meat from animals confirmed with CWD.
 - Use strong on-farm biosecurity to prevent introduction and spread.
 - Apply surveillance, testing, movement restrictions, and do not allow positive animals into the food chain.
 - Follow herd certification programs focused on prevention and risk management.

Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary

News: An international bird-watching programme was organised at Rakchham in the Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary by local administration and partners, with delegates from 15 countries.

About Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary



Figure 9. Source – Himachal Forest Deptt.

- **Location:** It is in **Kinnaur district, Himachal Pradesh**, situated between Sangla Valley and Chhitkul.
 - It is a part of **western Himalaya range**.
 - It lies in a **dry zone and does not experience the monsoon** much, allowing year-round exploration.
- **Other name:** It is also known as **Sangla Valley (Rakcham Chitkul) Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- **Area:** The reserve forest spreads over an area of about **304 square kilometres**.
- **Altitude:** It is located around **5,500 m** in elevation.
- **River:** The **Baspa River** flows through the Baspa (Sangla) Valley, the corridor where Rakchham and Chitkul are situated.
- **Key Pass:** The **Lamkhanga Pass route** passes through the sanctuary and **connects Kinnaur with the Gangotri Glacier** of Himachal Pradesh..
- **Fauna:** It is habitat of black bear, brown bear, musk deer, leopard, snow leopard, monal, chakor.
- **Flora:** Vegetation features **rhododendron thickets, oak-pine woodlands**, patches of juniper, and diverse alpine herbs valued for medicine.

Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025

News: Recently, the Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025 was released by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Bali.

About Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025



Figure 10. Source – FAO

- **Released by:** Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations
- **Aim:** To provide reliable data on **forest area, condition, management, and use** to guide global forest policy, sustainable management, and conservation efforts.
- It evaluates **the status and trends of the world's forests**.

Key Findings

- **Over 90 percent** of the world's forests are naturally regenerating.
- The **global rate of deforestation continues to decline**.
- The **net loss of forest area has dropped** by more than half compared to the 1990s.

- **Forests span more than 4 billion hectares worldwide**, with nearly half located in tropical regions.
- Naturally regenerating forests occupy **3.83 billion hectares**, accounting for **about 92% of the total global forest area**.
- **Primary forests constitute nearly one-third of the total global forest area**.
- **The rate of expansion of planted forest areas has slowed down globally**.
- **The world's total forest growing stock, biomass, and carbon reserves have shown an overall increase**.

Key Findings related to India

- **India's Global Ranking:** India has **climbed to the 9th position globally** in **total forest area**, improving from the **10th position** in the previous assessment. This reflects India's consistent efforts in afforestation and sustainable forest management.
- **Annual Forest Area Gain:** India has **retained its 3rd position worldwide** in **annual forest area gain**, demonstrating the country's steady progress in expanding green cover.
- **Government Initiatives Recognized:** The improvement in ranking is attributed to several national initiatives and programmes focused on **forest protection, afforestation, and community participation**.
- **Key Contributing Campaigns:** The **"Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam"** campaign has played a major role by inspiring citizens across India to actively participate in **tree plantation and conservation efforts**.
- **Community Participation:** The GFRA 2025 acknowledges **growing public involvement** in forest conservation, emphasizing that **people's participation** is crucial for achieving a greener and more sustainable future.
- The improved ranking reinforces India's **commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-13 and SDG-15)** related to climate action and life on land. It also strengthens India's position as a **global leader in sustainable forest management** and climate resilience.

'We Rise' Initiative

News: Recently 'We Rise – Women Entrepreneurs Reimagining Inclusive and Sustainable Enterprises' initiative was launched by NITI Aayog.

About 'We Rise' Initiative



Figure 11. Source – PIB

- **Launched by:** NITI Aayog's **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** in collaboration with **DP World**.
- The initiative operates under WEP's **"Award to Reward (ATR)" programme**.
 - The **Award to Reward (ATR) initiative** was launched in 2023.
 - It is a **framework under WEP that unites ecosystem partners** to support women entrepreneurs **through targeted collaborations** while recognizing and celebrating their success stories.
- **Aim:** It aims to identify, mentor, and support **high-growth-potential women-led MSMEs** across India.

- **Objective:** To empower **women-led enterprises** in India by enabling their access to **global markets** and helping them **scale their businesses internationally**.
- **Scope:** The initiative will focus on **100 women entrepreneurs** with product-based businesses. These entrepreneurs will receive **customized mentorship** and **export-readiness support** to meet international trade standards.
- **Focus Areas of Empowerment:** The partnership aims to **empower product-centric women entrepreneurs** through access to trade opportunities, mentorship, and business visibility.
 - It supports **inclusive trade**, ensuring that women-led businesses contribute to **India's export growth** and **global value chains**.
 - The **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** already engages with over **90,000 women entrepreneurs**.
- **Global Exposure and Trade Opportunities:** Under ATR Programme, selected entrepreneurs will get the opportunity to **showcase their products at Bharat Mart in Dubai**, located in the **Jebel Ali Free Zone (Jafza)**.

About the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)

- **Established:** 2018 by NITI Aayog as an **aggregator platform** for women entrepreneurs. It became a **public-private partnership (PPP)** in 2022.
- It has over 47 partners from the **public and private sectors**.
- It serves as a **national aggregator** to strengthen the women entrepreneurship ecosystem in India.
- It functions as an enabler, **addressing six key ecosystem needs** — access to finance, market linkages, training and skilling, mentoring and networking, compliance and legal assistance, and business development services.

Iceland

News: Iceland, long free of mosquitoes, has now detected *Culiseta annulata* mosquitoes.

About Iceland



Figure 12. Source – Britannica

- It is a **Nordic island country** in the **North Atlantic Ocean** and the **most sparsely populated country in Europe**.
- **Location:** Iceland lies **between the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans**, east of Greenland and just **south of the Arctic Circle**, on the **northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge**.
- **Area:** Iceland has a total area of **102,775 square km**.
- **Capital:** The capital and largest city is **Reykjavik**.
- **Geographical feature**
 - It is the **only part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge above sea level**, with frequent volcanic and geothermal activity.
 - The **interior** is a **mountainous lava plateau** with sand fields, glaciers, and rivers that reach the sea through lowlands.

- **Rivers:** The **longest river** is **Þjórsá**.
- **Climate**
 - The climate is **subarctic**.
 - The **Gulf Stream warms the country**, giving a temperate climate with chilly summers and high precipitation.
- **EU membership Bid:** In 2013, it **ended its EU membership bid** because of the EU's **fisheries policy**.
- **High human development:** Iceland consistently ranks among the **top countries on the Human Development Index (HDI)**, reflecting a high quality of life.
- **Fauna:** The **Arctic fox is the only native land mammal** in Iceland.
 - **Walruses** were **once native to Iceland but disappeared** after human settlement.
- **National Parks:** Iceland has **three national parks** – Vatnajökull, Snæfellsjökull, and Þingvellir.

Kolam Tribe

News: In Telangana's Adilabad district, the Green India Challenge launched a pilot bamboo plantation to help restore the livelihoods of Kolam tribal communities.

About Kolam Tribe



Figure 13. Source – MoTA

gathering, and also engage in hunting, animal husbandry, making wooden articles, wage labour, and shifting cultivation.

- **Social Structure**
 - Their society is **patrilineal and divided into exogamous clans**.
 - **Marriages** within the **same clan are not allowed**, and clan names are used as surnames.
 - **Villages, called "pod,"** are well **planned with a Chavdi at the centre** and a village goddess in front.
 - A **council of village** family chiefs, chosen **for five years**, maintains social order.
 - There is a **rising trend toward nuclear families**, with dowry practices and increasing instances of bride price.
- **Language used:** They speak **Kolami (a Dravidian language)** and write in Devanagari; many also speak Marathi, Telugu, or Gondi.
- **Cultural beliefs:** They follow **animism and nature worship** alongside **Hindu practices**, revering ancestors and deities such as Renuka, Jaitur, Maroti, Bhairum, SanSurayak, and Jelayak.

- They are also called **Kolamboli, Kulme, or Kolmi**.

- **Location:** They mainly live in **Madhya Pradesh** and parts of **Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana**.

- **Type vulnerability:** They are recognized as a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)** and are also listed as a **Scheduled Tribe**.

- **Livelihood:** They depend on **agriculture, forest work, and food**

- Some of them also consider themselves as the descendants of Pandavas of **Mahabharata**.
- **Rituals and festival celebrations:** The Kolam people celebrate different rituals that include **Matya** or **Churaghali**, **Bai-Baki**, **Sati**, **Jaitur Pooja**, **Waghai Pooja**, **Chait**, **Mohdombari**, **Bhimayak**, **Korod**, **Morang Dev pooja** etc.
 - Their festivals include **Kargul**, **Dussehra**, **Nag Panchami**, **Akharpakha**, **Atari**, **Pola**, **Fulzadni**, **Holi**, **Diwali**, **Aaichi**, **Pettadiyam**, **Metti-Diyam** etc.
- **Art:** Kolam women create intricate geometric floor designs known as “**adivasi kolam**,” .
 - It is expressive floor art and a way of welcoming Goddess Lakshmi by putting them at the house's entrance.

Sevilla Forum on Debt

News: The Sevilla Forum on Debt was launched at the 16th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16) in Geneva.

About Sevilla Forum on Debt



Figure 14. Source: unctad.org

- It is a **new global platform** to address the **escalating crisis of sovereign debt** faced especially by developing countries.
- **Launched on:** The **Sevilla Forum on Debt** was launched on **October 22, 2025**, during the **16th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16)** held in **Geneva**.
- It is one of the **first concrete outcomes** of the **Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)**.
- **Supported by:** It is a **Spanish-led initiative**, supported by both the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** and the **UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)**.
- **Aim:** To **promote responsible borrowing and lending practices** and **drive reform of the global debt architecture**, which has long been overdue.
- **Objective:** It seeks to maintain **political momentum** on debt reform and promote **tangible progress toward a more equitable global financial system** by bringing together **governments, creditors, and international financial institutions**.
- **Functions:** The Forum is designed to function as an **open and inclusive space for dialogue and coordinated action on sovereign debt reform**.
 - The Forum is a key component of the **Sevilla Platform for Action** and complements the **Sevilla Commitment**, the principal outcome document adopted at FfD4.
 - The Forum will also **monitor and support the implementation** of the debt-related initiatives transforming **political commitments into institutional frameworks** for **fairer, more predictable debt governance**.

- The Forum also provides a **comprehensive platform for dialogue** among **borrowers, lenders, academics, civil society, and experts**, enabling them to **exchange knowledge, collaborate, and develop innovative solutions** to global debt challenges.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

News: The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) week commenced on October 20, 2025. The meetings are being attended by representatives from more than 200 jurisdictions, along with various observers.

About Financial Action Task Force (FATF)



Figure 15. Source: Tehran times

About	The FATF is the global watchdog for money laundering and terror financing .
Establishment	It was formed in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris as an inter-governmental body .
Mandate	To set global standards and promotes effective implementation of legal, regulatory, and operational measures to combat: Money laundering, Terrorist financing, Proliferation financing and other threats to the integrity of the international financial system .
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It has 39 members (Russia membership was suspended in 2023) including U.S.A, India, China, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Germany, France, and the EU.● India became a member in 2010.● Over 180 countries are connected through FATF-style regional bodies (FSRBs).
Headquarters	Paris, France
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Monitoring & Informing: Tracks how criminals and terrorists raise, use, and move funds and raises awareness on emerging money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing techniques.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Setting Standards: Issues global recommendations to coordinate action against organised crime, corruption, and terrorism and encourages countries to adopt best practices for preventing illicit financial activities. ● Assessing Compliance: Evaluates whether member countries are taking effective legal and operational measures.
Non-Compliance Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members must endorse FATF recommendations and undergo mutual evaluations. ● Non-compliant countries may be placed on the Grey List (increased monitoring) or the Black List (high-risk jurisdictions). ● FATF member countries and other international organizations are likely to impose economic sanctions and various restrictive measures on nations placed on the blacklist.

About FATF's Black and Grey List

- **Black List:** The FATF blacklist identifies nations with severely deficient **anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CFT) frameworks**.
 - These jurisdictions are **considered non-cooperative** in the global effort to combat money laundering and terrorism financing.
 - As a result, **FATF member states and international bodies may impose economic sanctions** and other restrictive measures against them.
- **Grey List:** The FATF grey list, officially termed "**Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring**," includes countries that **have strategic weaknesses in their AML/CFT systems** but **have formally committed to addressing them** through agreed action plans.
 - Grey-listing indicates a **higher risk of money laundering and terrorist financing** and can serve as a warning or precursor to potential sanctions.

Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JAIMEX) – 2025

News: Recently, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sahyadri participated in the Sea phase of JAIMEX-25 (Japan India Maritime Exercise) from 16 to 18 Oct 2025.

About Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JAIMEX) – 2025



Figure 16. Source: ET

- **Participants:** Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF)
- **First Edition:** 2012
- **Indian Naval Representation:** INS Sahyadri – an indigenously built **Shivalik-class Guided Missile Stealth Frigate**.

- **Japanese Participation:** JMSDF assets included **JS Asahi**, **JS Oumi**, and **Submarine Jinryu**.
- **Phases:** Sea Phase and Harbour Phase
- **Strategic Significance:**
 - JAIMEX-25 highlights the **Special Strategic and Global Partnership** between India and Japan, established in 2014.
 - It reinforces both nations' commitment to a **Free, Open, and Inclusive Indo-Pacific**.
 - It also enhances **naval cooperation, maritime security, and regional stability** in the Indo-Pacific domain.

About INS Sahyadri

- INS Sahyadri is a **Shivalik-class Guided Missile Stealth Frigate** of the Indian Navy.
- It is the **third ship** of the class, designed for **multi-role operations** including surface, air, and sub-surface warfare.
- **It is indigenously designed and built** in India, representing the nation's growing **defence self-reliance**.
- It was commissioned in **2012**.
- It features **stealth technology** to reduce radar and infrared signatures.
- It is equipped with **advanced weapon systems, sensors, and integrated combat suites** for multi-dimensional warfare.