

# **Factly Weekly**

**Compilation**

**2025**

**For UPSC CSE Prelims  
Exam**

**1<sup>st</sup> Week**

**December 2025**

**INDEX**

WorldSkills Asia Competition (WSAC) 2025.....	2
INS Taragiri.....	2
Pilot Trainer Aircraft “Hansa-3(NG)” .....	4
Khamniungan Tribe.....	5
Asia Power Index 2025.....	5
Sanchar Saathi App .....	7
Major Irrigation Projects in India .....	7
Mula–Mutha River .....	9
Sittannavasal Site .....	10
SIM Binding.....	10
Paulos Mar Gregorios Award .....	11
Dr. Rajendra Prasad – First President of India.....	12
Exercise EKVURIN .....	13
Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) Framework.....	14
Heron Mk II .....	15
World Summit on Disaster Management (WSDM) 2025.....	16
High-Speed Test of Indigenous Fighter Escape System .....	17
New Geographical Indication (GI) Products .....	18
Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Amendment Rules, 2025 .....	19
Charpala Wildlife Sanctuary .....	20
Operation Trident .....	20
Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) .....	21
Sakhir Declaration .....	23
Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) .....	24
Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) .....	25
Winter Olympics 2026.....	26
Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025.....	27
Health Security and National Security Cess Bill, 2025.....	28
Key Facts about Yellow Sea .....	29
Mahad Satyagraha.....	29
Finfluencers.....	31
Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme .....	32
Onchocerciasis .....	33
Hindu Rate of Growth .....	33
Right to Disconnect .....	34

### WorldSkills Asia Competition (WSAC) 2025

News: India has achieved an impressive 8th-place finish in its debut participation at the WorldSkills Asia Competition (WSAC) 2025.

#### About WorldSkills Asia Competition (WSAC) 2025



Source: PIB

- WSAC 2025 was the third edition of the prestigious continental skills competition.
- Participation: It brought together 500+ young competitors representing 29 Asian member and guest nations.
- The competition featured 44 skill categories spanning traditional, modern, and tech-driven disciplines.
- The event provided participants with valuable opportunities to promote local education, economic development, tourism, and international cultural exchange.
- India Performance
  - India participated in the WorldSkills Asia Competition (WSAC) 2025 for the first time.
  - Selection: The competitors were selected through the IndiaSkills National Competition 2024, a rigorous multi-stage process.
  - India Participation led by: The participation was led by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
  - Rank: India achieved an impressive 8th rank among 29 participating nations in its debut attempt.
  - Medal tally/major achievements: India secured a total of six honours, including medals and Medallions for Excellence.

### INS Taragiri

News: INS Taragiri (Yard 12653) was delivered to the Indian Navy at MDL, Mumbai.

#### About INS Taragiri



Source: PIB

- INS Taragiri is the fourth ship of the Nilgiri-class (Project 17A) frigates of the Indian Navy.
- New version: The new Taragiri is a reincarnation of erstwhile INS Taragiri, a Leander-class frigate.
- Built by: It is the third P17A frigate built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilding Ltd (MDL), Mumbai.
- Designed by: Warship Design Bureau (WDB) of the Indian Navy.
- It is designed as a versatile, multi-mission platform capable of meeting present and future maritime challenges.
- Taragiri has an impressive 75% indigenous content, showcasing India's expanding defence manufacturing ecosystem.
- Features:
  - Propulsion and Platform System: Taragiri is powered by a Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion configuration. The system consists of both diesel engines and a gas turbine, allowing flexibility in speed and fuel efficiency.
  - Each shaft is fitted with a Controllable Pitch Propeller (CPP) for improved manoeuvrability.
  - A state-of-the-art Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS) ensures centralised and automated control of ship systems
  - Weapons and sensor suite: The potent weapon and sensors suite comprises BrahMos SSM, MFSTAR and MRSAM complex, 76mm SRGM, and a combination of 30 mm and 12.7 mm close-in weapon systems, along with rockets and torpedoes for anti-submarine warfare.

#### About Project 17A

- Project 17A is an Indian Navy initiative to build seven advanced stealth frigates as successors to the Shivalik-class (Project 17).
- Project 17A frigates are versatile multi-mission platforms, designed to address current and future challenges in the maritime domain.
- These frigates feature superior stealth characteristics, enhanced automation, advanced sensors, and modern weapon systems.
- Built by: Of the seven ships, four – Nilgiri, Udaygiri, Taragiri, and Mahendragiri – are being built by MDL, and three by GRSE (Himgiri, Dunagiri, and Vindhyagiri).

- Project 17A demonstrates India's rising maritime strength and supports long-term security objectives in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The three frigates earlier delivered under the Project are –
  - [INS Himgiri](#)
  - [INS Udaygiri](#)
  - [INS Nilgiri](#)

### Pilot Trainer Aircraft "Hansa-3(NG)"

News: India has launched its first indigenous pilot trainer aircraft, Hansa-3(NG), marking the country's march towards self-reliant aerospace manufacturing.

#### About Pilot Trainer Aircraft "Hansa-3(NG)"



Figure 1. Source – CSIR-NAL

- It is India's first indigenous trainer aircraft developed for pilot training.
- Developed by: It is designed and developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bengaluru, under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- Aim
  - The aircraft provides a cost-effective alternative to foreign trainers and trains pilots for Private and Commercial Pilot Licences.
  - It supports India's aviation ecosystem by meeting the growing demand for pilots through indigenous technology.
- Key features
  - It is a two-seater, low-wing, composite airframe with a bubble canopy that gives panoramic visibility.
  - Powered by: It is powered by a fuel-efficient, digitally controlled Rotax engine with

an advanced electronic fuel injection system that maintains the optimum fuel-air mixture at different altitudes.

- The aircraft has a modern glass cockpit and electrically operated flaps.
- Range: It offers a range of 620 nautical miles, 7 hours of endurance, and a maximum cruise speed of 98 KCAS.
- It serves as an ideal low-cost trainer for pilot licensing, and an electric variant, E-HANSA, is under development to support sustainable aviation.

#### About CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL)

- It is India's only civilian aerospace research and development laboratory focused on aerospace science and engineering.
- It was founded on 1 June 1959.



- Headquarter: It's headquarter is in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- It functions under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India.

### Khamniungan Tribe

News: Recently, the Prime Minister of India referred to the Khamniungan tribe in his 'Mann Ki Baat' address, bringing attention to their culture and traditions.

#### About Khamniungan Tribe



Figure 2. Source: indovocations

- The Khamniungan are one of the major Naga tribes, inhabiting eastern Nagaland (India) and north-western Myanmar.
- Name: The name *Khamniungan* comes from 'Kham' (water), 'Niu' (great), and 'Ngan' (source), meaning "source of great water/river".
- Origin: Their settlements lie in mountainous and riverine regions, spreading up to the Chindwin River in Myanmar.
- Language: They speak Khamniungan, which is a Sino-Tibetan language.

- Economy: Their primary livelihood is jhum (shifting) cultivation, growing rice, millet, and vegetables.
  - They are known for traditional cliff-honey harvesting practices that have been passed down for generations
- Festival: The major festivals of the Khamniungan tribe are Tsokum Sumai and Khaotzao Sey Hok-ah Sumai.
- Beliefs and Values: They traditionally follow animistic, nature-centric beliefs, honouring spirits of land, water, and ancestors.
  - Rituals often include animal sacrifice and symbolic offerings.
  - The village priest (Am-pao) plays a central role in ceremonies.

### Asia Power Index 2025

News: India has secured the third rank in the Asia Power Index 2025, while the United States and China hold the 1st and 2nd positions respectively.

#### About Asia Power Index 2025

## Factly Compilation [First Week] December 2025



Source – NewsOnAir

- The Asia Power Index is an annual assessment that measures the ability of countries to shape and respond to their external environment and evaluates the power dynamics of countries across Asia.
- Started in: 2018 (first edition)
- 2025 edition: It is its seventh edition.
- Published by: It is compiled and published by the Lowy Institute, an Australia-based think tank.
- Features: The index evaluates the power of 27 countries and territories across Asia.
- Index components
  - The index is based on 131 indicators grouped under eight thematic measures that together capture different aspects of national power.
- Eight thematic measures

Resources	Influences
Economic Capability	Diplomatic Influence
Military Capability	Economic Relationships
Resilience	Defence Networks
Future Resources	Cultural Influence

- India's performance
  - India scored 40.0 out of 100, secured the third rank, and crossed the threshold for “major power” status for the first time.
  - India ranks third for economic capability and future resources in the 2025 edition of the index.

Created with love ❤ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.  
 Visit [academy.forumias.com](https://academy.forumias.com) for our mentor based courses.

- India's economic and military capability have both increased.
- India's weakest area is defence networks, where it ranks 11th.

### Sanchar Saathi App

News: Sanchar Saathi is in news as DoT has ordered all smartphone makers to pre-install the app through mandatory directions.

#### About Sanchar Saathi App



Figure 3. Source – WION

- Sanchar Saathi is a citizen-centric initiative available as a mobile application and website.
- It empowers mobile subscribers, strengthens their security, and increases awareness about citizen-centric initiatives of the Government.
- Launched by : It was launched by the Department of Telecommunications in 2023.
- Aim: The app aims to safeguard mobile users by enabling identity management, fraud and scam reporting, device verification, and spreading awareness on telecom and cyber risks.
- Key services
  - Chakshu tool: It allows users to report fraudulent communication like spam calls, SMS, or WhatsApp messages.
  - Block lost/stolen devices: It helps users trace and block lost or stolen mobile phones so they cannot be used in India.
  - Know mobile connections: It enables users to check the number of mobile connections registered in their name.
  - Know genuineness of mobile handset: It allows users to check if a mobile phone is genuine before buying it.
  - Report incoming international calls: It enables users to report international calls that appear as local Indian numbers.

### Major Irrigation Projects in India

News: India has numerous major irrigation projects that are essential for improving agricultural output and effectively managing the nation's water resources.

#### About Bhakra Dam





Source – Tribune

- Bhakra Dam is a concrete gravity dam built across the Sutlej River, near the Punjab–Himachal Pradesh border.
- Operated and maintained by: Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)
- It is the world's highest straight gravity dam and also Asia's second tallest dam.
- Nangal Dam located downstream works in tandem with Bhakra Dam.
- Benefitted states: It benefits the states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Rajasthan.
- Uses: The Bhakra Dam provides irrigation, generates hydroelectric power, controls floods, supplies drinking water and promotes fisheries and tourism through its Gobind Sagar reservoir.

#### About Pong Dam

- Pong Dam is an earth-fill embankment dam built on the Beas River in the Shivalik foothills of Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh.
- The reservoir was created in 1975 and named in honour of Maharana Pratap.
- It was recognized as a Ramsar Wetland site in 2002.

#### About Lendi Project and Babhali Barrage

- The Lendi Project is an Inter-State Major Irrigation Project jointly undertaken by the States of Telangana and Maharashtra.
- Aim: The project aims to irrigate a total of 49,000 acres, benefiting both Telangana and Maharashtra.
- Location: The Babhali barrage is a dam being constructed 83 km from Nanded, Maharashtra on the Godavari river.

#### About Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP)



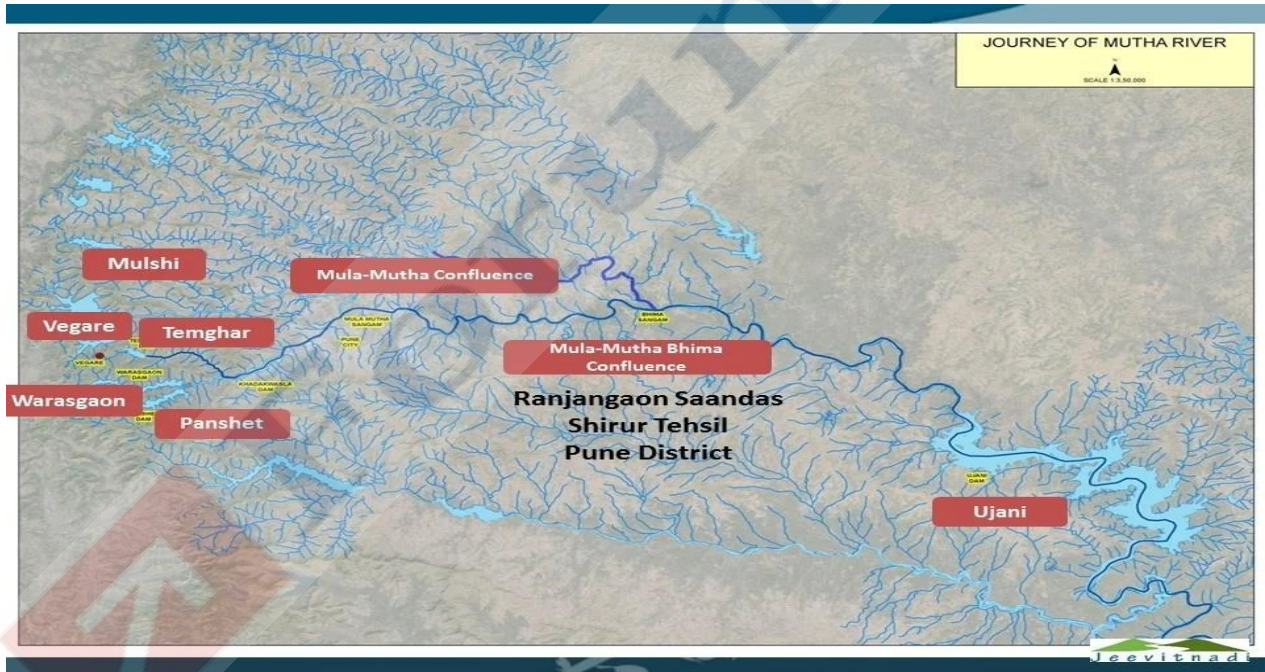
Figure 4. Source – IE

- The ERCP is a major multi-purpose water project designed to provide both drinking water and irrigation water to the eastern and southeastern regions of Rajasthan.
- River: The main river used for the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP) is the Chambal.
- Aim: To improve drinking water availability and support irrigation needs in drought-prone areas of eastern Rajasthan.
- Major Components of the Project:
  - The ERCP includes the construction of a 1,300-kilometre-long canal network that will carry water from the Chambal River to the targeted districts.

### Mula-Mutha River

**News:** Under the NRCP, the Mula-Mutha pollution control project is about 65% complete and is expected to finish by March 2026.

#### About Mula-Mutha River



Source: Jeevitnadi

#### Origin

- Mula River: It begins at Muleshwar Devrai in Mulshi (Maharashtra), where a small stream near the Shiva temple is considered its source.
- Mutha River: It is also called Muthai in Marathi and originates in the Western Ghats.
- Confluence: Both the Mula and Mutha rivers flow down from the Western Ghats and meet in Pune city at Sangam Bridge, where they merge to form the Mula-Mutha River.

Tributaries: The Mose River and Ambi River joins the Mutha River.



- The Pawna River flows into the Mula River.
- Drains into: After flowing eastward, the Mula–Mutha River joins the Bhima River and eventually becomes part of the Krishna River system.
- Major Dams: The Temghar Dam is one of the important dams on the Mutha River.
- The Mulshi Dam is the only major dam built on the Mula River.

### Sittannavasal Site

**News:** The historical and archaeological significance of Sittannavasal, known for its Jain heritage, Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, ascetic stone beds, and rare early mural paintings dating to the 7th–9th century CE.

#### About Sittannavasal Site



Figure 5. Source – TH

- Sittannavasal is located in Pudukkottai district, Tamil Nadu.
- Historical importance
  - There are presence of megalithic monuments (stone circles, cists, urn burials) proves pre-historic settlement.
  - It is a major Jain centre from 1st century BC to 10th century AD (nearly 1000 years).
  - Jain rock-cut cave was excavated between 7th–9th centuries AD.
- Major monuments at Sittannavasal:
  - Arivar-Koil (Jain Rock-Cut Cave Temple):

It also shows continuous Jain presence for 1000 years.

- It contains 9th-century AD fresco paintings with Jain themes such as – Lotus pond, Bhavyas (souls striving for moksha) and floral, animal and decorative motifs, made using long-lasting vegetable colours.
- Architecture: The hall (mandapam) with carved pillars and a small sanctum with main deity Parshvanatha, shown in meditation with a five-hooded serpent above him.
- Ezhadippattam: It is a natural cavern on the eastern side containing seventeen polished rock beds ('samanar padukkai'), used by Jain monks for severe penance.
- Tamil-Brahmi inscription: It includes Tamil-Brahmi inscription (dated by Iravatham Mahadevan to 1st century BC) and many other Tamil inscriptions up to 10th century AD.
- Megalithic Burial Sites: It consists of urn burials, stone circles, cists. It indicates the settlement of Iron Age communities before Jain occupation.
- Navach-chunai: It is a small rock-cut shrine submerged in a natural tarn (pond) located on the northeastern slope.

### SIM Binding

**News:** The Department of Telecommunications has recently directed major app-based communication services to implement SIM binding to curb cyber-frauds and misuse.

#### About SIM Binding



Source – ET

- SIM binding is a security process that links a user's messaging or communication app to the specific SIM card used during registration.
- Authorized under: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued these directions under the Telecommunication Cybersecurity Amendment Rules, 2025.
  - Under the Rules, the DoT has introduced the concept of Telecommunication Identifier User Entity (TIUE).
    - TIUE is a non-licence entity that uses telecommunication identifiers such as mobile numbers to identify and serve its users.
- Working mechanism
  - liSIM binding nks the app to the SIM used during registration and continuously checks the same SIM identifiers stored in it.
  - If the identifiers in the device do not match those recorded at registration, the app treats it as an identity mismatch and blocks access.
- Key features
  - The app works only when the registered SIM is present and active in the handset.
  - Web or desktop instances must be logged out periodically, not later than six hours, with re-linking through a QR code.

### Paulos Mar Gregorios Award

**News:** Dr Tessy Thomas has been honoured with the prestigious Paulos Mar Gregorios Award 2025 for her significant achievements in missile development and her impactful work in promoting women's empowerment.

### About Paulos Mar Gregorios Award





Source – Sophia Society

- Instituted by: Sophia Society of the Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church
- Purpose: The purpose of the award is to acknowledge service that uplifts society and demonstrates a union of intellectual rigour with humane, ethical responsibility.
- Frequency: The award is presented every alternate year.
- Named after: It is established in memory of Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios, who served as the first Metropolitan of the Delhi Diocese and was also a scholar, linguist, theologian, ecumenical leader and socio-political thinker.
  - He also served as President of the World Council of Churches, adding to the global significance of his legacy.
- Award is given to: The award honours individuals whose contributions reflect the blend of scholarship, moral clarity, social commitment and spiritual depth associated with Paulos Mar Gregorios.
  - It recognises people whose work upholds human dignity and empowers disadvantaged or overlooked communities.
  - It also highlights leadership in advancing gender equality, a cause that Dr Gregorios strongly advocated.

#### About Eighth Paulos Mar Gregorios Award 2025

- Dr Tessy Thomas, known widely as India's "Missile Woman," received the 8th Paulos Mar Gregorios Award in 2025.
- Recognized for: She was recognized for her outstanding contribution to women's empowerment, space technology and missile development.
  - She played a crucial role in the development of the Agni-V missile and became the first woman to head an Indian missile project, earning the title "Agniputri."

#### Dr. Rajendra Prasad – First President of India

News: Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan paid homage to India's first President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, on his birth anniversary.

#### About Dr. Rajendra Prasad – First President of India

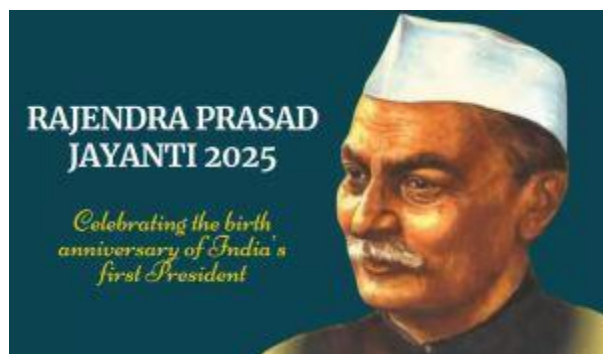


Figure 6. Source – MoneyControl

- Dr. Rajendra Prasad was born on December 3, 1884, in Ziradei, Bihar.
- He studied at the University of Calcutta.
- He began his career as a lawyer and was admired for his sharp legal intellect.
- Role in the Freedom Struggle: The freedom movement inspired him to leave his legal practice and join national politics.
  - He became a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and actively participated in major movements such as Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience Movements.
- In 1906, he played a key role in founding the Bihari Students Conference, which became an important platform for nurturing nationalist thought.
- Leadership in the Constituent Assembly: After Independence, he was elected President of the Constituent Assembly tasked with drafting the Constitution of India.
  - He also chaired the Assembly's committee on food and agriculture, contributing to crucial policy discussions.
  - His leadership ensured balanced debate, consensus-building, and adherence to democratic procedures.
- First President of India: On January 26, 1950, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the first President of India.
  - His presidency (1950–1962) was distinguished by humility, impartiality, and steadfast commitment to democratic values.
  - He is the only President of India to have served two full terms.
  - His 12-year tenure from 1950 to 1962 continues to be the longest presidency India has ever seen.
- Later life and legacy: After completing his tenure, he retired from active public life and lived at Sadaqat Ashram in Patna.
  - He passed away on February 28, 1963.

### Exercise EKUVERIN

**News:** Exercise EKUVERIN has commenced in Thiruvananthapuram, India.

### About Exercise EKUVERIN



Source: moneycontrol

- EKUVERIN is a bilateral joint military exercise between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).
- The term “EKUVERIN” comes from the *Dhivehi* language and means “Friends”, symbolising mutual trust and friendship.
- The exercise has been conducted annually since 2009, held alternately in India and the Maldives.
- This is 14th edition of the exercise, which has commenced on December 2, 2025 till December 15, 2025.
- Participation: Both sides have deployed 45 personnel each, the Indian contingent coming from a Garhwal Rifles battalion.
- Aim: To enhance interoperability, coordination, and mutual understanding between the two armies.
- Major components include: Tactical drills, Joint mission planning, Exchange of best operational practices and improving small-team coordination.
  - Training will focus on counter-insurgency (CI) and counter-terrorism (CT) operations.
  - Drills are designed to simulate operations in jungle, semi-urban, and coastal terrain.
  - EKUVERIN-14 reinforces India’s Neighbourhood First policy and highlights New Delhi’s commitment to defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Significance: The exercise underscores the shared commitment of both nations to regional peace, stability, and maritime security. It also strengthens strategic ties amidst growing security challenges in the region.

### Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) Framework

News: The government told the Rajya Sabha that India’s performance on 26 key global indices is being reviewed under GIRG.

#### About Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) Framework





Source – NITI Aayog

- GIRG is an initiative by India to track and improve its standing on 26 selected global indices through inter-ministerial coordination.
- Aim: Its aim is to find gaps in these indices and address them through reforms that support India's growth and global standing.
- Coordinator of framework: The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) of NITI Aayog serves as the knowledge partner and central coordinator for the framework.
- Nodal Ministry: Under GIRG, 26 indices are shared among 17 nodal ministries, and each ministry is responsible for improvement on its assigned indices.
- Structure of framework: The framework links 26 indices published by 16 international agencies with nodal ministries that must review them and act on the findings.
- Themes covered by indices: The indices under GIRG cover four broad themes:
  - Economy
  - Development
  - Governance
  - Industry
- Key indices to be reviewed:
  - Democracy Index by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
  - Network Readiness Index by Portulans Institute (with World Bank/others)
  - Global Hunger Index by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe
  - Climate Change Performance Index by Germanwatch

### **Heron Mk II**

News: India plans to procure additional satellite-linked Heron Mk II UAVs from Israel under emergency procurement to strengthen unmanned capabilities after Operation Sindoor.

#### **About Heron Mk II**





Source – Janes

- The Heron Mk II is a medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) used for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance roles.
- Manufactured by : It is manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).
- Key features
  - Payload: It can carry nearly 500 kg of payload, with a maximum take-off weight of 1,430 kg.
  - Endurance: It can reach an altitude of 35,000 feet, speed of 150 knots and remain in the air for 45 consecutive hours.
  - Range: It has an operating range of more than 1,000 km.
  - Advanced sensors: It including Synthetic Aperture Radar, electro-optical systems and Signals Intelligence sensors (SIGINT) for all-weather intelligence.
  - It can carry long-range radars and electro-optical or infra-red observation systems ( EO/IR) to detect and track targets.
  - Remote Operations: Encrypted satellite communication and fully automated take-off and landing allow the drone to fly beyond line of sight.

### World Summit on Disaster Management (WSDM) 2025

**News-** The World Summit on Disaster Management 2025 in Dehradun announced stronger weather forecasting capacity for disaster-prone Uttarakhand.

#### About World Summit on Disaster Management (WSDM) 2025

- WSDM 2025 is a global platform on disaster resilience that brings together scientists, policy makers, practitioners, and industry leaders to discuss strategies for disaster risk reduction in a changing climate.
- Held in: It was held in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, from 28th to 30th November 2025.
- Organising Bodies: The summit was jointly organised by the Government of Uttarakhand, the Uttarakhand Council for Science & Technology, and the Himalayan Academy of Science & Technology.
- Theme: The theme of WSDM 2025 was “Strengthening International Cooperation for Building Resilient Communities.”

- Aim: The summit aimed to strengthen international cooperation, promote multi-stakeholder engagement, and develop innovative and scalable solutions to address global disaster risks and build resilient communities, especially in fragile ecosystems like the Himalayas.

#### Key Features

- Focus on cooperation and learning: The summit promoted knowledge-sharing, resilient community-building, cross-border collaboration, and disaster risk reduction among different stakeholders.
- Platform for climate adaptation dialogue: It discussed climate change adaptation and provided a forum for thought leaders and community representatives to share their insights and experiences.
- Strengthening early-warning systems: The summit highlighted announcements on expanded radar networks, upgraded early-warning systems, and dedicated Himalayan climate studies.
- Resilient livelihoods in the Himalayas: It discussed technological innovation, agri-startups, and CSIR value-addition models as tools for building resilient livelihoods in the Himalayan region.

### **High-Speed Test of Indigenous Fighter Escape System**

News- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted a high-speed rocket-sled test of a fighter aircraft escape system at controlled velocity.



Source- NDTV

#### About the Test

- The test was conducted to validate canopy severance, ejection sequencing, and complete aircrew recovery.
- It marks a major achievement in India's indigenous defence capability and places India among nations with advanced in-house escape system testing facilities.
- Test conducted by: The test was conducted by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- Test Conducted at: The test took place at the Rail Track Rocket Sled (RTRS) facility of the Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh.
- Key Features
  - Controlled Velocity Test: A dual-sled system with the LCA aircraft forebody was propelled to a controlled velocity of 800 km/h using multiple solid propellant rocket motors fired in phases.

Created with love ❤ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.  
Visit [academy.forumias.com](https://academy.forumias.com) for our mentor based courses.

- Simulation and Measurement: The test used an instrumented Anthropomorphic Test Dummy to record loads, moments, and accelerations experienced during canopy fragilisation and ejection.
- Monitoring and Validation: The entire sequence was captured through onboard and ground-based imaging systems for detailed analysis and validation.

### **New Geographical Indication (GI) Products**

**News:** Recently, five products from Tamil Nadu have been granted the Geographical Indications (GI) tag.

#### **About New Geographical Indication (GI) Products**



#### **About Woraiyur Cotton Sari**

- The Woraiyur cotton saris are native to Tiruchi district, Tamil Nadu. They are woven in Manamedu on the banks of the Cauvery.
- The saree is traditionally woven using a 'korvai loom', a special mechanism that forms the continuous 'korvai' border and the body of the fabric in one seamless process.
- It carries traditional mango, bangle, geometric, and pearl motifs that enhance the beauty of its body and border.

#### **About Kavindapadi Nattu Sakkarai (Jaggery Powder)**

- Kavindapadi in Erode district is a major producer of jaggery powder, supported by extensive sugarcane fields irrigated by the Lower Bhavani Project canal.
- The jaggery powder is made by mechanically crushing sugarcane and slowly evaporating the extracted juice, resulting in a pure and chemical-free product.
- This traditional method of production gives the jaggery its distinct texture, flavor, and nutritional value.

#### **About Thooyamalli Rice**

- Thooyamalli rice is a traditional sambha-season variety that requires 135 to 140 days for cultivation.
- The name "Thooyamalli," meaning "pure jasmine," reflects its characteristic aroma and quality.

- It is commonly called 'pearl rice' because of its glossy, lustrous appearance and is highly valued for its rich nutritional properties.

#### **About Namakkal Makkal Pathirangal (Soapstone Cookware)**

- Namakkal's soapstone cookware, popularly known as kalchatti, has been used in South Indian households for generations.
- These vessels are valued for their natural heat retention, durability, and roots in ancient culinary traditions.

#### **About Ambasamudram Choppu Saman (Wooden Toys)**

- Ambasamudram choppu saman refers to handcrafted wooden miniature toys, including tiny kitchen utensils, tables, chairs, and other play items.
- This craft dates back to the 18th century and has been practiced for over two centuries in Tirunelveli district.
- Traditionally, these toys were carved from indigenous trees like the Manjal Kadamba tree (*Neolamarckia cadamba*), teak, and rosewood.

### **Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Amendment Rules, 2025**

**News-** Recently, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, in a notification, highlighted the change in the definition of small companies under the Companies Act, 2013.

#### **About Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Amendment Rules, 2025**

- The Central Government has issued the Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Amendment Rules, 2025, amending the Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Rules, 2014.
- Aim: This amendment aims to bring more companies under the small company definition, which provides them with benefits like simplified compliance and reduced burdens.
- Issued by: It is issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA).
- Effective date: The amendment is effective from December 1, 2025.
- Key changes
  - Paid-up capital: The paid-up capital limit for classifying a company as a small company has been increased from ₹4 crore to ₹10 crore.
  - Turnover: The turnover limit for treating a company as a small company has been increased from ₹40 crore to ₹100 crore.

#### **About the concept of a "small company"**

- Companies Act, 2013 introduced the concept of a "small company" with simplified compliance for businesses.
- The Companies (Specification of Definition Details) Rules, 2014 set the financial thresholds.
- The 2025 Amendment continues efforts to revise limits and support ease of doing business by updating capital and turnover criteria.



## Charpala Wildlife Sanctuary

**News:** A rare striated grassbird was sighted in Chaprala Wildlife Sanctuary in Gadchiroli, marking a major range expansion in Maharashtra.

### About Charpala Wildlife Sanctuary

- Location: Charpala Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra.
- Established: The sanctuary was established in 1986 as a protected area for wildlife conservation.
- Area: The sanctuary spans approximately 140 square kilometers.
- The Markhanda and Pedigundam hills flank the sanctuary from the northeast and south, respectively.
- River Flowing through it: The Pranhita River flows along the western boundary of the sanctuary. The sanctuary lies near the confluence of the Wardha and Wainganga rivers.
- Tribe: The sanctuary is home to the indigenous Gond tribal community.
- Vegetation: The sanctuary is dominated by southern tropical dry deciduous forests interspersed with grasslands, creating ideal conditions for varied wildlife.
- Flora: The sanctuary's flora includes teak, Arjun, salai, mahua, bel, dhawada, tendu, sissoo, and semal as major tree species.
- Fauna: Chaprala Wildlife Sanctuary is home to around 131 species of wild animals.
  - Bengal tiger, leopard, jungle cat, sloth bear, wild dogs, jackals, Sambar deer, spotted deer, barking deer, blue bull (nilgai), wild boar, Flying squirrels are found in the sanctuary.
  - The sanctuary also hosts around 131 species of birds along with seasonal migratory birds.
  - Reptiles such as Indian python, common Indian monitor, and various snake species inhabit the sanctuary.

## Operation Trident

**News:** Recently, the Indian Navy celebrates Navy Day to commemorate the Indian Navy's attack on Karachi Harbor during Operation Trident in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

### About Operation Trident

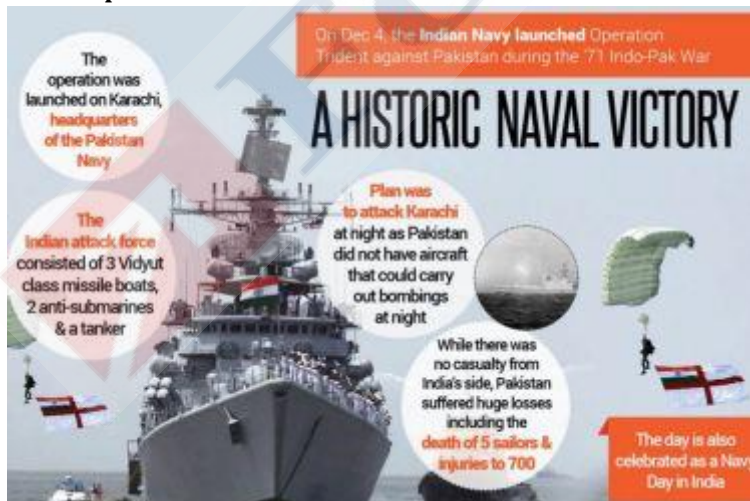


Figure 7. Source – Tol

- Operation Trident was a naval operation launched by the Indian Navy during the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971.
- The operation was launched on December 4, 1971, as part of the India-Pakistan War.
- The war began when Pakistan Air Force launched pre-emptive strikes on Indian airfields on December 3, 1971. India responded by declaring war in the early hours of December 4.
- Objective: The primary goal was to inflict significant damage on Pakistani vessels in the Karachi harbour.

## Factly Compilation [First Week] December 2025

- Execution: INS Kiltan, Katchall, Nipat, Nighat, and Veer participated in the operation. Indian Navy used Soviet Osa missile boats equipped with SS-N-2 Styx missiles for the attack.
- Impact of the Operation: The Indian Navy sank three vessels near Karachi, including: PNS Khaibar (222 Pakistani sailors killed), PNS Muhafiz (33 Pakistani sailors killed), MV Venus Challenger, a merchant ship.
  - The Indian Air Force (IAF) also played a role by strafing Karachi's Kemari oil tanks, contributing to the operation's success.
- Innovative Tactics: The attack marked the first use of missiles in the region for naval warfare. Radio silence and ingenious communication methods were employed to avoid detection.
  - Indian Navy used coastal defence vessels in an offensive role. Russian language was used for radio communications to deceive Pakistani signals intelligence.

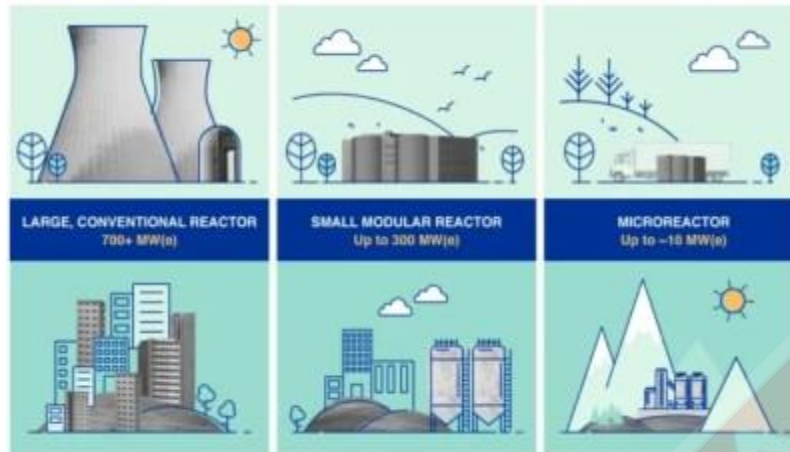
### About India's naval operations in neighboring countries

Operation	Year	Name of country
Operation Python	1971	Pakistan
Operation Talwar	1999	Naval support during Kargil
Operation Castor	2004	Maldives
Operation Sagar	2020	Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius
Operation Sagar Bandhu	2025	Sri Lanka

### Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

News: Russian nuclear company Rosatom is set to promote its small modular reactors (SMRs) for specific applications in India, while also positioning its new-generation nuclear projects as the foundation of bilateral energy cooperation.

### About Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)



Source: iaea.org

- Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are advanced nuclear reactors with a smaller power capacity (up to 300 MW(e) per unit) compared to traditional nuclear power reactors.
- They are designed to provide a more flexible, safe, and cost-effective solution for energy generation, with applications ranging from industrial use to providing power in remote regions.
- Features of SMRs
  - Small size: SMRs are compact and can be deployed in areas unsuitable for larger reactors.
  - Modular design: They are prefabricated and shipped as units, simplifying installation.
  - Scalability: SMRs can be deployed incrementally as energy demand increases.
  - Passive safety: They rely on natural processes like gravity and convection for safety.
  - Fuel efficiency: SMRs can operate for up to 30 years without refueling, compared to 1-2 years for conventional reactors.
- Advantages of SMRs
  - Cost-effective: SMRs are cheaper to build and maintain due to their smaller size and modular design.
  - Flexible deployment: They can be deployed in remote areas or regions with limited grid infrastructure.
  - Safety: Passive safety systems reduce the risk of accidents and radioactive releases.
  - Quick installation: The modular nature allows for faster deployment compared to traditional nuclear plants.
  - Environmental benefits: SMRs produce low-carbon energy, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Integration with Renewables: SMRs can complement renewable energy sources by providing stable, dispatchable power.
- Limitations of SMRs
  - Technology Choice: Numerous evolving SMR designs may lead to regulatory challenges and hinder cost optimization.
  - Finance: The SMR industry lacks large-scale fabrication facilities for serial manufacturing, requiring significant investment.
  - Licensing: New SMR technologies may struggle to fit within existing licensing frameworks.
  - Radioactive Waste: SMRs generate radioactive waste that requires storage and disposal.
  - Safeguards: A robust safeguards approach is necessary for new SMR technologies to ensure security and non-proliferation.

- Public Perception: Nuclear power faces public opposition due to fears of disasters.

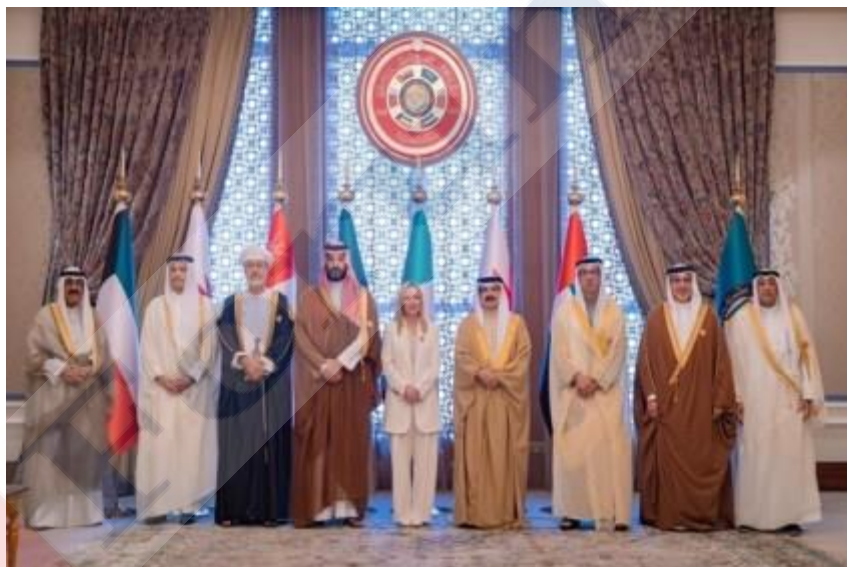
### About India's Current Operational Nuclear Capacity

- Targeted Nuclear Capacity Growth: India's nuclear power generation capacity is set to rise from 8,780 MW currently to 9,480 MW by the end of 2025-26.
- By 2029-30, the capacity will reach 13,480 MW and is expected to reach 21,880 MW by 2031-32 as ongoing and planned projects come online.
- Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) in India: Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is developing next-generation SMRs: BSMR-200 (200 MW), SMR-55 (55 MW) and High-temperature gas-cooled reactors (up to 5 MW for hydrogen generation).
- SMRs like BSMR-200 and SMR-55 are planned for use in: Captive power plants for energy-intensive industries (e.g., aluminium, steel, and metal), repurposing retiring fossil fuel-based plants and Off-grid and remote location.

### Sakhir Declaration

**News:** The 46th GCC Summit in Manama concluded with the adoption of the Sakhir Declaration, reaffirming the commitment to deeper political, security, and economic integration.

### About Sakhir Declaration



Source: DD News

- The Sakhir Declaration of the 46th Session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), held in Manama, Bahrain.
- It outlines several key principles and commitments aimed at enhancing the unity, security, and prosperity of the GCC member states.
- Key Commitment Under the Declaration
  - Strengthening integration among GCC states: Aiming for greater unity to promote regional stability, peace, and prosperity.
  - Respect for sovereignty and non-interference: Emphasizing non-interference in internal affairs and rejecting the use of force or threats. They highlighted the indivisibility of GCC security.

Created with love ❤ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.  
Visit [academy.forumias.com](https://academy.forumias.com) for our mentor based courses.



## Factly Compilation [First Week] December 2025

- Support for the Palestinian cause: Support for a just, lasting peace in the Middle East, particularly the two-state solution, with East Jerusalem as Palestine's capital, in line with international legitimacy.
- Economic development and technological advancement: Completing the GCC Common Market and Customs Union.
- Environmental responsibility: Commitment to addressing climate change, reducing carbon emissions, and advancing clean energy projects.
- Support for Bahrain in International Diplomacy: Support for Bahrain's role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

### About Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

- It is a regional intergovernmental political and economic union established in 1981.
- Members: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE
- Objective: To have coordination, integration and inter-connection between Member States in all fields, strengthening ties between their peoples, formulating similar regulations in various fields and encouraging cooperation of the private sector.
- Headquarters: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

### Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)

**News:** More than 1,500 academics are protesting the draft ISI Bill, 2025, which seeks to repeal the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959.

### About Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)



Source – Times Now

- The Indian Statistical Institute is a national institution for statistics and related fields.
- Founded by: It was founded by Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in 1931.
- Established as: It was established as a society under the Societies Registration Act.
- Nodal ministry: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
- Headquarters: Its headquarters is in Kolkata with centres in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Tezpur.
- Institution of National Importance: It was declared an Institution of National Importance through the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959.
- Aim: Its aim is to advance statistical research and provide academic training supporting national planning.

- Function: Its functions include research and training in statistics and related fields and conducting academic programmes.
- Governing structure
  - The highest decision-making body is a 33-member Council.
  - The Council includes elected members and government representatives.
  - The Director is appointed by the Council, and the institute has substantial autonomy in academics and administration.

### About Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2025

- Change in Status: The Bill aims to convert the ISI from its current status as a registered society into a statutory body corporate, aligning its legal and governance framework with other “Institutes of National Importance” like the IITs and IIMs.
- New Governing Body:
  - It proposes the creation of an 11-member Board of Governance (BoG) as the principal executive body, which would replace the current 33-member council.
  - The BoG would be largely composed of Central Government nominees.
  - Visitor’s Role: The President of India would become the Visitor of the institute, with powers to order inquiries, review the institute’s work, and remove the Director.
  - Academic Council’s Role: The existing Academic Council, which currently has the final say in academic matters, would become an advisory body, with its recommendations subject to approval, modification, or rejection by the BoG.

### Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS)

**News:** Russia has ratified the RELOS military pact with India ahead of President Putin’s New Delhi visit.

### About Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS)



Source – Tatva News

- RELOS is an India–Russia arrangement to share logistics and support at each other’s military facilities for troops, warships and aircraft during missions away from home bases.
- Scope of the Agreement
  - Military exchanges: It makes logistics easier for joint military exercises, training activities and warship visits to each other’s ports.
  - Humanitarian assistance: It supports cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations.

- Operational efficiency: It speeds up logistics procedures, facilitates mutual use of airspace and improves joint functioning, especially for the Indian Navy.

### **India's Logistics Agreements with Various Countries**

- India and USA: India and the USA have Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) between them.
- India and France: India and France have a Logistics agreement covering joint exercises, port visits, humanitarian efforts and maritime intelligence sharing.
- India and Australia: India and Australia have a Comprehensive Mutual Logistics Support (MLSA), 2020.
- India and Japan: India and Japan have an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), 2020.

### **Winter Olympics 2026**

**News:** The Olympic flame was lit at Italy's presidential palace and began its nationwide relay for the 2026 Winter Games.

### **About Winter Olympics 2026**



Source – IOC

- The 2026 Winter Olympics, formally the 25th edition of the Winter Olympic Games and widely referred to as Milano Cortina 2026.
- Hosted by: It is going to be held in northern Italy.
  - It will be the fourth Olympic competition hosted by Italy, after the Winter Games in Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1956 and Turin in 2006, and the Summer Games in Rome in 1960.
- Venues: The Games are co-hosted by Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, which are well-known winter sports locations.
- Motto: The motto of the Milano Cortina Olympics is "IT's Your Vibe." ("IT" referencing the host country)
- Mascot
  - The mascot for the 2026 Games is Tina, a white stoat.
  - Branding also includes "The Flo," six characters inspired by the snowdrop plant.
- Sports include: The Games will feature 116 events across 16 winter sports, with around 2,900 athletes from 90 countries expected to participate.
- New Events: A new sport, ski mountaineering (skimo), will make its Olympic debut.
  - It involves athletes climbing and descending mountainous terrain using specific skiing techniques.

- Status of Russian and Belarusian Athletes: Qualifying athletes from Russia and Belarus will participate under the designation “Individual Neutral Athletes,” continuing a policy that began at the 2024 Paris Summer Games in response to the Russia-Ukraine War.
- India’s Presence
  - Abhinav Bindra, India’s first individual Olympic gold medallist, has been selected as a torchbearer.
  - Arif Khan has qualified in Slalom and may be India’s sole athlete.

### About Winter Olympics

- The Winter Olympics is a major international multi-sport event held once every four years for sports practiced on snow and ice.
- The first Winter Olympic Games were held in 1924 in Chamonix, France.
- Governing Body: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the governing body of this Olympic.

### Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025

**News:** Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025, the fifth India–Malaysia joint military exercise, began at Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan.

### About Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025



Figure 8. Source – PIB

- Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025 is a bilateral joint military exercise between the Indian Army and the Royal Malaysian Army.
- Origin: It has been conducted since 2012.
- Aim: The aim is to jointly rehearse sub-conventional operations under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate.
- 2025 Edition
  - Host: It is hosted at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan from 5 to 18 December 2025.
  - Participants: The Indian contingent consists of troops from the DOGRA Regiment and Malaysia is represented by the 25th Battalion Royal Malaysian Army.

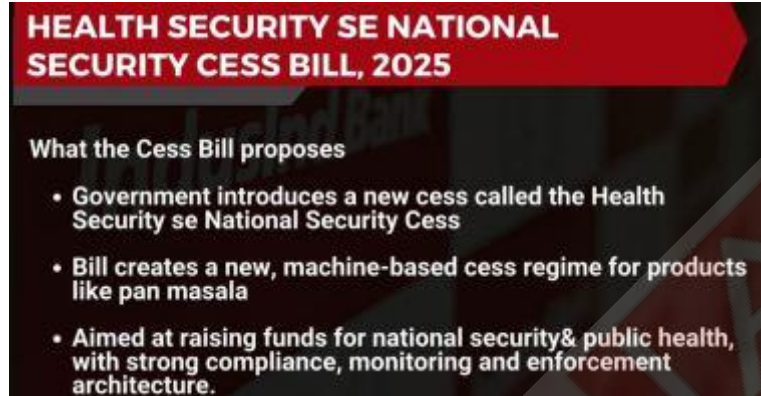
- Scope of Exercise Harimau Shakti-2025
  - Joint counter-terrorist operations: It covers joint counter-terrorist operations, including cordon-and-search, search-and-destroy missions and heliborne operations.
  - Training and tactical drills: Training includes Army Martial Arts Routine, combat reflex shooting, Yoga, securing helipads and casualty evacuation drills.
  - Interoperability and defence cooperation: The exercise improves interoperability, reduces risk to life and property, aligns with United Nations peacekeeping requirements and shares best practices and combat skills to deepen defence cooperation and bilateral relations.



## Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025

**News:** Lok Sabha recently passed Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 which would levy a special cess on pan masala and use the fund for improving public health and strengthening national security.

### About Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025



Source – NDTV

- The Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 has been introduced to create a clear legal framework for a special excise cess.
- Intent: To tax pan masala based on production capacity, as it cannot be effectively included in the traditional excise system.
- Key provisions
- Cess framework: The cess will apply to machines installed or processes undertaken to manufacture specific goods (initially pan masala).
- Cess computation: The cess will be calculated based on machine capacity (e.g., pouches or tins per minute) or a flat rate for manual processes.
- Compliance Requirements:
  - Registration: Businesses must register and declare machinery or processes involved in the manufacturing.
  - Self-Declaration of Machinery / Process Parameters: Taxable person must submit self-declaration of machines/processes. Details declared may be verified or calibrated by the proper officer
  - Monthly Payments and Returns: The cess are to be paid monthly, with returns filed by the 7th of each month.
  - Abatement: If machines are inactive for 15+ days, a reduction in cess will apply.
- Monitoring and Enforcement: The Bill establishes a framework for scrutiny, audit, and inspection of manufacturing processes and machines.
- Appeals Process: A multi-tier appeal system allows businesses to challenge decisions, starting from the Appellate Authority to the Supreme Court.
- Penalties: Penalties for non-compliance include monetary fines, confiscation, imprisonment, and other enforcement actions.
- Revenue Use: The funds generated will be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India and used for activities related to national security and public health.
- GST Impact: The cess is separate from the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and will not impact GST revenues.

- Pan masala will continue to be taxed at a maximum 40% rate under GST based on consumption.

### Key Facts about Yellow Sea

**News:** Taiwan reported that China deployed warships from the Yellow Sea to the South China Sea, which Taiwan said created a regional threat.

#### Key Facts about Yellow Sea



Figure 9. Source – World Atlas

- The Yellow Sea is a marginal sea of the western Pacific Ocean.
  - Naming: It derives its name from the yellow colour of its waters, which comes from large amounts of silt and sediment carried mainly by the Yellow River.
  - Location: It is located between mainland China to the west and north, the Korean Peninsula to the east, and the Shandong Peninsula and Liaodong Peninsula to the south.
  - Borders: It is bordered by China on the west, North Korea and South Korea on the east, the Bohai Sea on the north, and the East China Sea on the south.
    - It connects to the Bohai Sea through the Bohai Strait and to the open Pacific through the Korea Strait.
  - Climate: The climate is marked by cold, dry winters and warm, wet summers, with seasonal winds shaped by the monsoon system.
- River inflow: Several rivers discharge into the sea, including the Yellow River, the Yangtze River, and the Yalu and Han Rivers, carrying heavy sediment and nutrients.
  - Major Currents: The Yellow Sea has a warm current that forms a branch of the Kuroshio-Tsushima system.
  - Important islands: The region contains many islands, including Jeju Island, the islands of the Shandong Peninsula and Ganghwa Island.
  - Environmental challenges: Overfishing, pollution and coastal reclamation have damaged biodiversity, reduced intertidal zones, and affected bird migration routes and marine habitats.

### Mahad Satyagraha

**News:** Mahad was a key site of India's earliest rights movements, which helped lay the foundation for human rights discourse and influenced the development of constitutional ethics.

#### About the Mahad Satyagraha



Source: [api.sci.gov.in](http://api.sci.gov.in)

- The Mahad Satyagraha took place in March 1927 in Mahad, Maharashtra by Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.
- It was a protest against the discriminatory caste system and the denial of access to public water sources for Dalits.
- Triggering Event: The Bombay Legislative Council passed a resolution in 1923 that granted dalits the right to use public water sources, but it was not enforced due to opposition from upper-caste Hindus.
- Preparation for the Satyagraha: Ramchandra Babaji More, a Mahad-based Dalit leader, invited Ambedkar to preside over the conference.
  - Ambedkar mobilised local dalit leaders and worked to raise awareness and create a collective Dalit identity for the movement.
- Conference and March: The Mahad Conference on March 19-20, 1927 and focused on awakening the dalits and rejecting the old path of subjugation.
- Chavadar Tank Incident:
  - On March 20, Ambedkar and his followers marched to the Chavadar Tank, where dalits were prohibited from drawing water.
  - Ambedkar drank water from the tank, symbolizing the rejection of untouchability and caste-based discrimination.
- Mahad 2.0: In December 1927, Ambedkar announced another conference, which was officially called a Satyagraha.
  - A court injunction prohibited dalits from using the tank, but the satyagraha continued with nearly 4,000 participants.
  - However, Ambedkar decided to suspend the Satyagraha to avoid direct confrontation with the state, after consultations with the participants.
- Legacy of the Mahad Satyagraha
  - Foundational Event of the Dalit Movement: The Mahad Satyagraha is often referred to as the foundational event of the dalit movement.
    - It was the first organized, large-scale protest where the dalit community came together to assert their rights and demand equality.
    - This movement set the stage for further dalit struggles for justice and paved the way for a more inclusive national consciousness.



## Finfluencers

News: SEBI has directed Mumbai-based financial influencer Avadhut Sathe and his Avadhut Sathe Trading Academy to cease offering investment advice or research services, as they are not properly registered.

### About Finfluencers



**Financial influencers or finfluencers are people who provide information and/or advice on various financial topics** such as investing in securities, personal finance, banking products, insurance, real estate investment, etc through social/digital media platforms/channels. Their activities may deal in areas regulated by financial sector regulators such as Sebi, Reserve Bank of India, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority, and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority.

Finfluencers attract investors/prospective investors with their engaging stories, messages, reels and videos on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Figure 10. Source: Forbes India

- A finfluencer is a social media influencer who shares advice or information on financial topics such as saving, investing, budgeting, cryptocurrency, and wealth-building.
- They typically create short, engaging videos that simplify complex financial topics, but the content may lack depth or accuracy.
- Financial guidance provided by them may be influenced by sponsorships or paid promotions, which can bias their advice.
- Prominence: They have become increasingly prominent on social media platforms in recent years.
  - The global influencer market grew from \$1.7 billion in 2016 to \$21.1 billion in 2023, showing rapid expansion.
  - Young people are particularly influenced by finfluencers, with 25% of 18–24-year-olds using social media for financial guidance.
  - Approximately 20% of young adults in this age group make investment decisions based on social media recommendations.
- Risk associated with Finfluencers:
  - Many finfluencers lack formal financial qualifications and are not regulated to provide financial advice.
  - They may promote complex or risky financial products they do not fully understand.
  - Their income often depends on sponsored posts, referral fees, or paid promotions, which may not always be disclosed.
  - Misleading financial promotions can lead to significant financial losses and may even constitute criminal offenses.

- Regulation of Finfluencers in India:
  - SEBI is the primary regulator responsible for overseeing financial markets, intermediaries, and anyone providing investment advice including finfluencers.
  - Under recent amendments (2024), SEBI has explicitly brought unregistered finfluencers under regulatory scrutiny to prevent misleading advice and protect investors.
  - Only SEBI-registered individuals (RIAs, research analysts, investment advisers) can give financial recommendations or claim returns.



- SEBI-regulated entities (mutual funds, brokers, advisors) cannot associate with unregistered finfluencers.

### Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme

**News:** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has handed over seven technologies developed under the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme to the three Services.

#### About the Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme



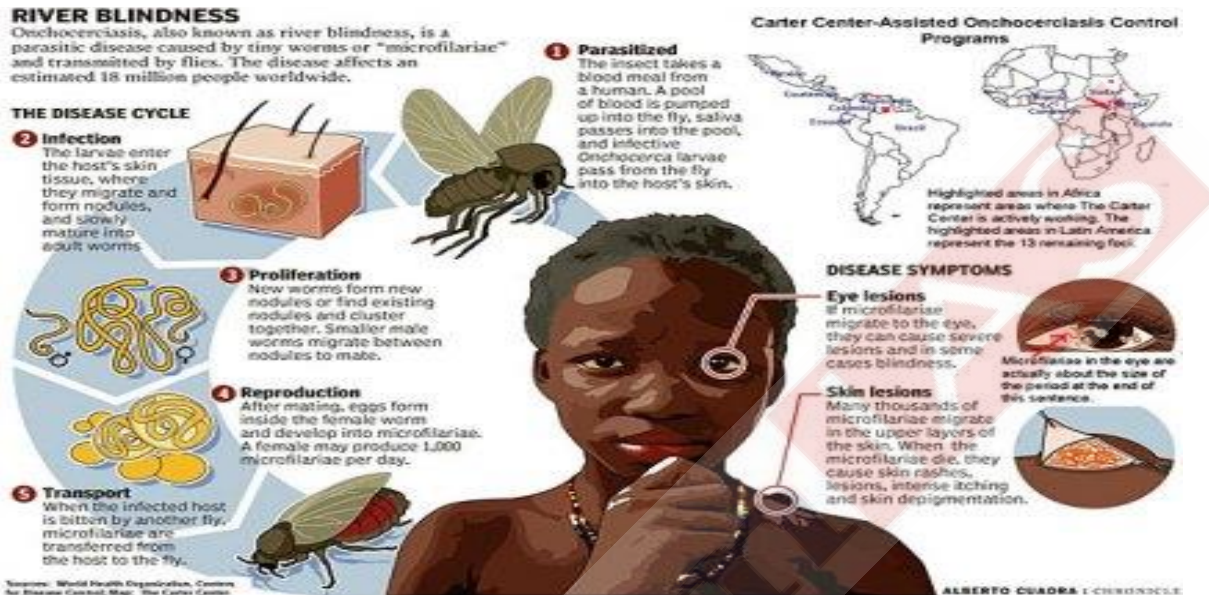
**TECHNOLOGY  
DEVELOPMENT FUND**  
DEFENCE R&D ORGANISATION  
Government of India

- The Technology Development Fund (TDF) is established under the Make in India initiative to promote self-reliance in defence technology.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Implemented by: Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO)
- The scheme supports the technological needs of the Tri-Services, defence production agencies, and DRDO.
- Purpose:
  - To empower Indian industry especially MSMEs and startups to innovate and develop advanced defence technologies.
  - To build a robust ecosystem that strengthens India's capability in cutting-edge defence manufacturing.
- Objective:
  - To accelerate India's path toward defence self-reliance by funding the development of indigenous technologies.
  - To offer grants-in-aid and additional benefits that help industries create modern defence solutions
- Vision: To establish an ecosystem that boosts advanced technology development for defence, aligning with the requirements of the Tri-Services, Defence Production, and DRDO.
- Mission: To foster self-reliance by enabling the creation of state-of-the-art indigenous defence systems and technologies.
- Project Duration: The maximum period allowed for completing a project under the scheme is 4 years.
- Focus Areas:
  - Major upgrades or new developments in existing defence products, processes, or applications.
  - Advancing technology readiness levels (TRL) from TRL 3 onward to full product realization.
  - Creation of futuristic or innovative technologies beneficial for defence use.
  - Development of indigenous substitutes for imported components lacking domestic technology.
  - Support is restricted to technologies or prototypes that have potential defence applications.

## Onchocerciasis

**News:** Niger becomes the first country in the African Region to eliminate onchocerciasis.

### About Onchocerciasis



Source: Midwivesrevisionuganda

- Onchocerciasis, or river blindness, is a parasitic disease caused by *Onchocerca volvulus*.
- It is the second leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide after trachoma.
- Transmission: The disease is transmitted to humans through repeated bites from infected blackflies of the *Simulium* genus, which are commonly found near fast-flowing rivers.
- Region Affected: Most affected populations live in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa and Yemen, with smaller endemic regions in Latin America.
- Mode of transmission: Blackflies acquire microfilariae when they bite an infected person. These microfilariae develop inside the fly into infectious larvae over time.
  - When the infected blackfly bites another human, the larvae exit the fly and penetrate the skin to begin a new infection.
  - Infected individuals may present with no symptoms or may develop itchy rashes, eye disease, or palpable nodules under the skin.
  - Blindness typically occurs only after long-standing, intense infection.
- Diagnosis: Microscopic examination of skin snips is the most reliable method for diagnosing onchocerciasis.
- Prevention: There are no vaccines or medications that prevent infection with *O. volvulus*.
  - Prevention relies on avoiding blackfly bites through personal protective measures.
  - Using insect repellent, wearing long-sleeved clothing, and limiting exposure to riverside habitats can reduce the risk of infection.

## Hindu Rate of Growth

**News-** Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit that the phrase "Hindu rate of growth" reflected a colonial mindset.

### About Hindu Rate of Growth

It is a term that describes India's low economic growth rates from the 1950s to the 1980s, which averaged around 3.5%.

Term Coined By: It was coined by economist Raj Krishna in 1978.

#### Key Features

- It indicates low per-capita GDP growth, which also depends on population growth.

**Gross domestic product (GDP) is the monetary value of all finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.**

- It remained steady despite changes in governments, wars, famines and crises.

#### India Outgrew the Hindu Rate of Growth

- GDP growth data shows that India started exceeding the Hindu rate of 3.5% even before the 1991 crisis and reforms.
- While average GDP growth was about 3.4% between 1956 and 1975, it increased to 5.8% during the period from 1981 to 1991.

#### Criticism

- Colonial Mindset Interpretation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the phrase reflected a colonial mindset that linked India's slow growth to the faith and identity of its people and gave the entire civilisation a tag of unproductivity and poverty.
- Disparaging Cultural Stereotype: It was also used disparagingly, with connotations related to supposed attitudes of fatalism and contentedness.

### Right to Disconnect

**News-** The Right to Disconnect Bill 2025 was recently introduced in Lok Sabha by MP Supriya Sule to promote work-life balance.

#### About Right to Disconnect

- It is the right of workers not to engage in work-related activities or communications through digital tools (including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers) or other communication tools outside working hours, without fear of punishment.

The right to disconnect aims to:

- Protect employee health: by addressing psychosocial risks, including stress and burnout.
- Ensure compliance with working hours: to reinforce designated working hours and necessary rest periods.
- Maintain work-life balance: helping employees safeguard their personal and family lives.

Legal framework: There is no specific law ensuring the right to disconnect in India  
Constitutional support: Article 38 promotes people's welfare, and Article 39(e) safeguards workers' health and strength.

Judicial view: Judgments such as Vishakha v. State of Rajasthan (1997) and Ravindra Kumar Dhariwal (2021) recognise dignity at the workplace and support reasonable accommodation for workers.

### **About The Right to Disconnect Bill 2025**

- The Bill proposes company-level rules and protocols on after-hours communication.
  - It requires Employees' Welfare Committees for negotiation with staff.
  - It mandates penalties for companies violating the provisions.
  - It proposes digital detox centres and an Employees' Welfare Authority.

### **Right to Disconnect Around the World**

- France was the first country to enact a formal right to disconnect law in 2017.
- Belgium has adopted rules requiring many employers to respect employees' right to disconnect after working hours.
- Argentina provides a legal right to disconnect for teleworkers outside agreed working hours and during leave.
- Portugal has passed protections that limit employers' after-hours digital contact with employees.
- Australia is the most recent country, adding a statutory right to disconnect through changes to the Fair Work Act in 2024.