Factly Weekly

Compilation

2025

For UPSC CSE Prelims Exam

3rd Week

November 2025

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Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT)

News: The Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT) was formally launched at COP30 on November 15 to manage climate–trade tensions.

About Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT)

Source – ToI

- It is a high-level forum designed to foster dialogue and explore practical solutions at the intersection of international trade policy, climate action, and development priorities.

- Launching: The IFCCT was launched at COP30, Belém (Brazil), on 15 November 2025.

- Aim: The forum aims to bridge the gap between the climate and trade communities by providing a dedicated, politically supported space for government officials and stakeholders to discuss and align climate and trade policies.

- Principle used: The IFCCT is built on the principle that trade can be a key lever for turning climate ambition into action.

- Key features

  - The Forum will begin with an open-ended consultation process into 2026 to define its topics and jurisdiction.

  - The Forum brings together governments, civil society, business groups, and international initiatives to discuss climate-related trade tensions.

  - It seeks interoperability rather than fragmentation in climate-related trade measures and aims to prevent trade becoming a fault line in global climate efforts.

Country Platform for Climate and Nature Finance

News: India and other countries announced plans to set up national 'country platforms' for climate and nature finance at COP30.

About Country Platform for Climate and Nature Finance

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- It is a strategic, country-driven mechanism that translate climate priorities into programmatic investment approaches.

- Announced at: The initiative was announced at a ministerial event during COP30 in Belem, Brazil.

- Aim: The aim of the country platform is to replace a fragmented project approach with a coordinated, country-led system that aligns stakeholders, financing flows, and policies with the country's climate and nature priorities.

- Coordination with Global Funds: The Green Climate Fund, with climate finance commitments of $19 billion, coordinates and supports these platforms.

- Members

  ○ Members include 13 countries: India, Cambodia, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Mongolia, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Rwanda, the Dominican Republic, Togo, South Africa, and a regional alliance – The African Islands States Climate Commission (AISCC).

  ○ Total no of country platform: With these (members named above), total number of platforms become 16, which also includes:

    ○ Brazil country platform

    ○ Caribbean regional platform

Note : For detailed information on The Green Climate Fund read this article here.

Operation SOUTHERN SPEAR

News: U.S.A Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced Operation SOUTHERN SPEAR to combat narco-terrorism, highlighting growing military tensions in the Latin American region, especially with Venezuela.

About Operation SOUTHERN SPEAR

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Source: Defence Scoop

- Launched by: U.S. Ministry of War (Defence)

- Objective: To defend the U.S.A homeland, combat narco-terrorism, and secure the Western Hemisphere from drugs, particularly those coming from Venezuela.

- The operation is part of broader efforts to curb drug trafficking and its devastating effects on U.S.A citizens.

- Background: The operation comes amid increasing tension between the U.S.A and Venezuela. U.S.A has accused Venezuela of being involved in illegal drug trafficking.

- The operation will involve military strikes and surveillance efforts to target drug trafficking boats operating in the Caribbean and surrounding regions.

- The operation builds on a pre-existing campaign (launched in January) that integrates robotic and autonomous systems (RAS) for detecting and surveilling drug trafficking.

Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)

News: Amid ongoing tensions with Bangladesh, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval is set to host Khalilur Rahman, the interim Bangladeshi government's National Security Adviser, for security discussions.

About Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)
Source: Universal Institutions

- The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) is a key regional platform aimed at enhancing security cooperation among Indian Ocean Region (IOR) countries.

- Objectives: To promote regional security by addressing transnational threats that affect all member nations.

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- Permanent secretariat: Colombo

- Origin: The CSC traces its roots to a 2011 trilateral maritime security grouping comprising India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.

  - It was revitalized and upgraded in 2020, evolving into a broader security cooperation platform that reflects contemporary regional challenges.

  - Mauritius formally joined as a full member in 2022, Bangladesh joined in 2024 and Seychelles currently participate as observer countries.

  - Current members include India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka.

- Five Pillars of Cooperation: The CSC's agenda is built around five major pillars, representing key security priorities in the Indian Ocean Region:

  - Maritime Safety and Security

  - Countering Terrorism and Radicalisation

  - Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organised Crime

  - Cyber Security and Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology

  - Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

  - These pillars enable structured collaboration, joint exercises, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building among member states.

Ambaji Marble

News: Recently, Ambaji Marble has officially received a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.
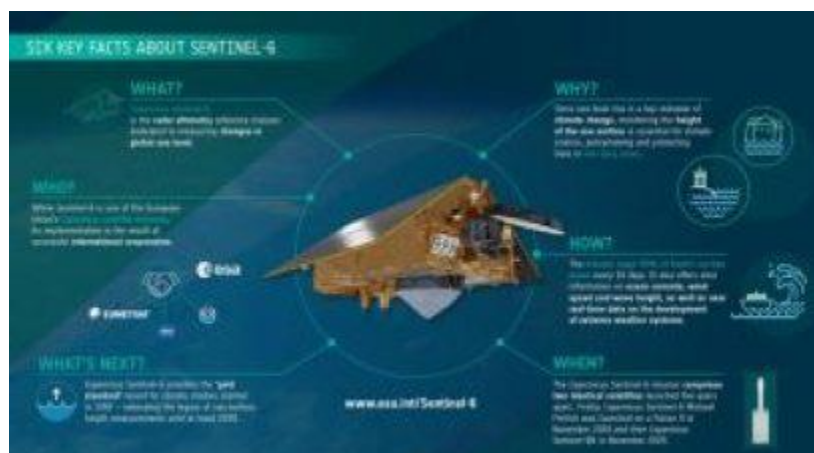
About Ambaji Marble
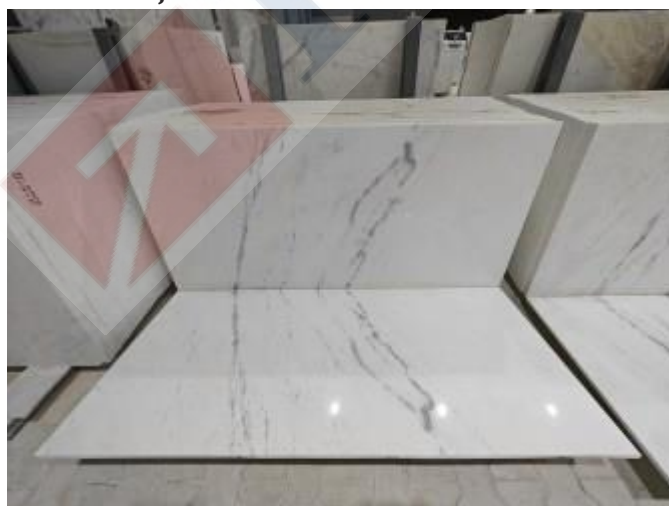
Source: Asian Marbles

- Ambaji Marble is sourced from the Banaskantha district in north Gujarat.

- Unique Characteristics:

  - Ambaji Marble is known for its milky-white color, durability, and natural beauty.

  - It has been used in the Dilwara Jain Temple in Mount Abu (constructed around 1,200-1,500 years ago), which still stands in excellent condition.

  - Ambaji marble is high in calcium and has a unique silicon oxide and calcium oxide content, contributing to its strength and shine, which are key reasons for its use in prestigious constructions.

- Historical Significance:

  - The marble has been used in the construction of the Ambaji temple, a prominent Shaktipeeth and pilgrimage site.

  - It has also been used in the construction of several other religious sites, memorials, and grand buildings both in India and abroad.

  - Beyond its commercial value, Ambaji Marble is linked to the spiritual significance of Ambaji Shaktipeeth, a sacred pilgrimage site, further enhancing its prestige.

- Global Use and Recognition:

  - Ambaji Marble has been exported globally, with notable uses in Miami, Los Angeles, Boston, New Zealand, and England. The marble has been used in high-profile projects, including the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Sentinel-6B Satellite

News: Recently, Sentinel-6B, an ocean-tracking Copernicus satellite, was launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

About Sentinel-6B Satellite

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Source – ESA

- It is an ocean-tracking satellite with six science instruments launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

- Joint mission: It is a joint mission between the United States' NASA and NOAA, and the European Space Agency (ESA).

- Launched vehicle used: It was launched by Falcon 9 launched vehicle.

- Aim: The mission aims to measure sea-level rise and ocean conditions with high precision and maintain a reliable sea-level record.

  - Data from Sentinel-6B is expected to improve the accuracy of weather forecasts, including storm and flood predictions, enabling administrators to make better real-time decisions to safeguard public property and protect coastal infrastructure.

- This launch is the fourth successful Copernicus Sentinel mission of 2025, following Sentinel-4A, Sentinel-5A, and Sentinel-1D.

- Key Features

  - It orbits Eearth at 7.2 kilometres per second and completes one revolution every 112 minutes.

- Pay load:

  - It is equipped with a highlyaccurate radar altimeter (developed by ESA) that measures the height of the ocean surface to within a centimetre.

  - Advanced Microwave Radiometer (AMR-C), provided by NASA.

  - A Global Navigation Satellite System Precise Orbit Determination (GNSS POD) receiver, developed by ESA.

  - A Doppler Orbitography and Radiopositioning Integrated by Satellite (DORIS Receiver).

  - A Laser Reflector Array, provided by NASA.

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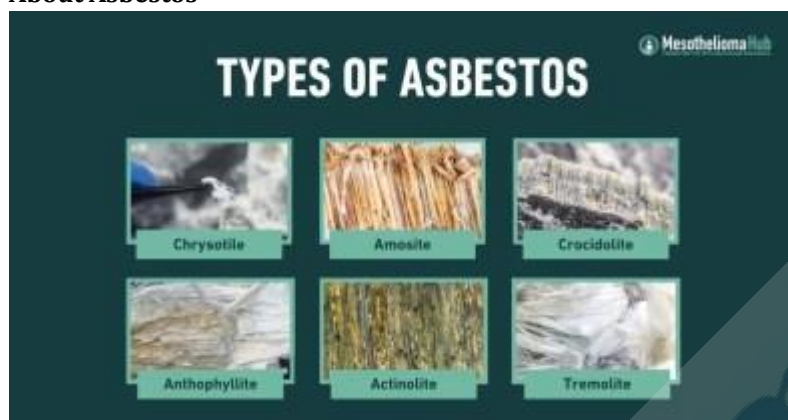Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.
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○ A GNSS Radio Occultation instrument, provided by NASA.

Asbestos

News: Asbestos contamination has led to the closure of over 70 public schools in Australia due to the discovery of tremolite asbestos in colored sand products.

About Asbestos

Source: EMS

- Asbestos is a fibrous material naturally present underground in rock and soil.

- Physical Features:

    ○ Asbestos is known for its strength and highly flexible and durable.

    ○ It is resistant to heat, fire, electricity and corrosion.

- Types of Asbestos

    ○ There are six commercial types: chrysotile, amosite, crocidolite, tremolite, anthophyllite and actinolite.

    ○ These types fall into two mineral groups: serpentine and amphibole.

        ○ Serpentine contains only chrysotile.

            ○ Fibers are long, curly and usually white.

        ○ Amphibole includes amosite, crocidolite, tremolite, anthophyllite and actinolite.

            ○ Fibers are needle-like, brittle and vary in color from green to blue to brown.

- Common Uses of Asbestos

    ○ It is added to building materials, insulation, fireproofing products and automotive brakes.

    ○ It is also found in several products, including cement, tiles, textiles, appliances, cosmetics and some toys.

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- Heath risk related to health:
  - When asbestos fibers become airborne and are inhaled or swallowed, they can get trapped in the body and remain there for decades.
  - Trapped asbestos fibers can cause inflammation and scarring in the lungs or abdomen.
  - Long-term exposure can lead to serious diseases such as mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestosis.
  - All types of asbestos are capable of causing mesothelioma.

ASW-SWC Mahe

News: The Indian Navy has unveiled the crest of ASW-SWC Mahe before its commissioning in Mumbai.

About ASW-SWC Mahe

Source: PIB

- INS Mahe is the first ship of the new Mahe-class ASW-SWC series, intended for the Indian Navy.
- The ship is named after the coastal town of Mahe on India's western coast, tying the unit to Indian maritime heritage.
- Built by: Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL) at Kochi.
- It embodies India's push for "Aatmanirbharta / self-reliance" in naval shipbuilding.
- Ship's motto: "Silent Hunters"—reflecting stealth, vigilance and the ASW ethos of submarine detection and neutralisation.
- Features of the ship:
  - The ship is optimised for shallow waters, swift manoeuvrability, and stealth—key in littoral ASW tasks.

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- Its missions include submarine-hunting in near-coastal waters, coastal patrol, maritime surveillance and protection of offshore/approach zones.

- The design emphasises low acoustic signature, reduced radar cross-section (RCS) and other stealth features (typical of ASW-SWC designs).

- The ship's crest features a traditional flexible sword—an "Urumi", from the martial art of Kalarippayattu (Kerala).

- The Urumi rises from stylised waves, symbolising agility, precision and lethal grace in the maritime domain.

- Strategic Significance: INS Mahe marks a significant milestone in India's indigenous warship-building capability for anti-submarine warfare in shallow/coastal waters.

ARKA GKT-1

News: Azimuth AI and Cyient Semiconductor announced the launch of 'ARKA GKT-1'. It is billed as India's first-generation intelligent-power platform-on-a-chip designed for high-efficiency edge AI and smart energy applications.

About ARKA GKT-1

- ARKA GKT-1 is India's first-generation intelligent-power platform-on-a-chip designed specifically for high-efficiency edge AI and smart energy applications.

- Developed by: Azimuth AI and Cyient Semiconductors.

- The project represents a complete custom ASIC turnkey solution developed through close collaboration between the two companies.

- The development process includes chip design, fabrication coordination, OSAT management for assembly, packaging and testing, and final chip delivery.

- It showcases the combined strengths of Azimuth AI's AI-driven silicon design capabilities and Cyient's semiconductor engineering expertise.

- Key Technical Features

  - ARKA GKT-1 integrates multi-core custom computing, advanced analogue sensing, memory and intelligent power management into a single, energy-efficient System on a Chip.

  - It is built using Azimuth AI's Software-Defined Silicon architecture, which enables flexibility and scalability for various applications.

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- ○ The chip incorporates Cyient Semiconductors' expertise in mixed-signal, low-power and power-efficient ASIC engineering.

- Target Applications

  - ○ The chip is tailored for smart utilities and advanced metering systems used in modern energy networks.

  - ○ It supports battery management systems that require efficient energy monitoring and control.

  - ○ It is suitable for smart city infrastructure that relies on intelligent, low-power edge devices.

  - ○ It is designed for industrial automation environments that require real-time edge intelligence and low energy consumption.

National Gopal Ratna Awards 2025

News: The National Gopal Ratna Awards 2025 are in news as the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying announced the winners.

About National Gopal Ratna Awards (NGRA)

Source – Ministry of Dairy

- The National Gopal Ratna Awards are the highest national honours in India's livestock and dairy sector across three award categories.

- They recognize excellence among dairy farmers, cooperatives and artificial insemination technicians in India's dairy sector.

- Nodal Agency: Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying

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- Presented on: The awards will be presented on November 26 as part of the National Milk Day celebrations.

- Starting: These awards are instituted under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission which was launched in 2014.
    - They have been presented annually since 2021.

- Awards consist of –
    - Best Dairy Farmer and Best Dairy Cooperative/FPO/MPC – These awards include a certificate, memento and cash prize of –
        - Cash prizes are ₹5 lakh for first place,
        - ₹3 lakh for second place and
        - ₹2 lakh for third place and
        - ₹2 lakh for North Eastern Region (NER)/Himalayan States.
    - Best Artificial Insemination Technician awards include a certificate and memento, with no cash prize.

Revised Insurance Framework of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

News: The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare announced revised PMFBY cover for wild animal attacks and paddy inundation from Kharif 2026.

About Revised Insurance Framework of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

Source – MyGov

- The revised framework expands crop insurance to cover localised damage from wild animal attacks and paddy inundation.

- The modalities follow PMFBY Operational Guidelines to ensure a scientific, transparent and feasible system.

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- Key features
  - Crop loss from wild animal attack is recognised as the fifth add-on cover under the localized risk category.
  - States will notify wild animals responsible for damage and identify vulnerable districts or insurance units.
  - Farmers should report losses within 72 hours through the crop insurance app by uploading geotagged photographs.
  - Paddy inundation is reintroduced as a localised calamity cover in flood-prone and coastal paddy areas.
  - Add-On Covers: In addition to this basic cover, the scheme allows "add-on covers", which are extra, optional protections that states can choose to offer for specific risks.
    - Earlier four main add-on covers under PMFBY are:
      - Prevented sowing/planting risk
      - Mid-season adversity cover
      - Post-harvest loss cover
      - Localised calamities cover (hailstorm, landslide, inundation, etc.)

About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- Launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- Aim: To provide comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop thus helping in stabilizing the income of the farmers.
- Coverage of crops: It covers –
  - food crops
  - oilseed crops
  - annual commercial/horticultural crops
- Premium: The prescribed premium is –
  - 2% for Kharif crops
  - 1.5% for crops and
  - 5% for commercial and horticultural crops.
  - Balance of actuarial premium is shared equally between State and Central government

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YUVA AI for ALL Initiative

News: Under the IndiaAI Mission, MeitY has introduced 'YUVA AI for ALL' initiative, a free course aimed at familiarising Indians particularly the youth with AI.

About YUVA AI for ALL Initiative
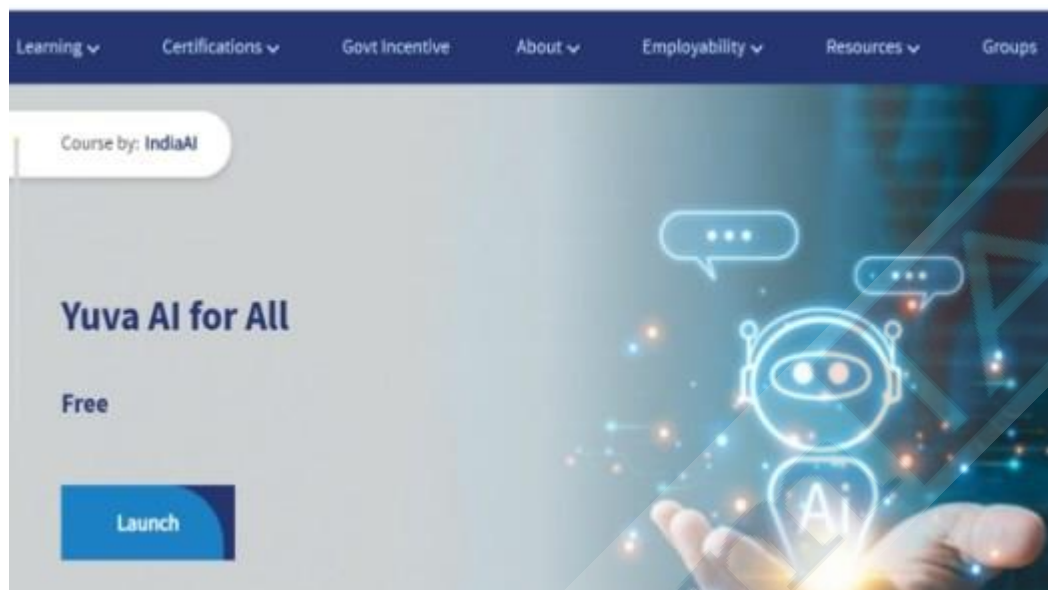
Source: OneIndia

- It is free national AI course called 'YUVA AI for ALL' under the IndiaAI Mission.

- Launched by: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)

- Aim: To make Artificial Intelligence easy to understand and accessible for all citizens of India, especially the youth.

- Purpose: To introduce AI in a simple, practical, and relatable way so that more people become comfortable with the technology.

- Course Overview: It is 4.5-hour, self-paced online course designed to build foundational knowledge of AI.

  - The course uses real-life Indian examples to make learning more meaningful and engaging for diverse learners.

  - The course consists of six short and engaging modules that introduce essential AI concepts.

  - The modules explain what AI is, how it works, and how it is transforming sectors like education, creativity, and work.

  - They also teach learners how to use AI tools safely, ethically, and responsibly, emphasizing responsible digital behaviour.

  - It also offers insights into future opportunities in the AI-driven world.Accessibility:

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- The course is available completely free of cost on popular learning platforms such as FutureSkills Prime, iGOT Karmayogi, and several other ed-tech portals. Learners can access the course anytime and anywhere, allowing them to learn at their own pace.

- Schools, universities, and organizations across the country can collaborate with IndiaAI to spread the course widely.

- Certification: Every learner who successfully completes the course will receive an official certificate issued by the Government of India.

- Significance: The initiative targets to empower 1 crore (10 million) Indian citizens with foundational AI skills.

  - The program helps to bridge the digital divide and promotes ethical, inclusive, and responsible use of AI among the population.

  - It also prepares India's workforce with essential skills for the future of jobs.

  - It combines global AI knowledge with the Indian context, highlighting ethical and inclusive AI use.

Sir Creek

News: Over a year after identifying the need for fast patrol boats and Landing Craft Assaults for deployment in Sir Creek, the Brahmaputra basin, and eastern Ladakh, the Army has moved forward by issuing two RFPs to vendors for their procurement.

About Sir Creek

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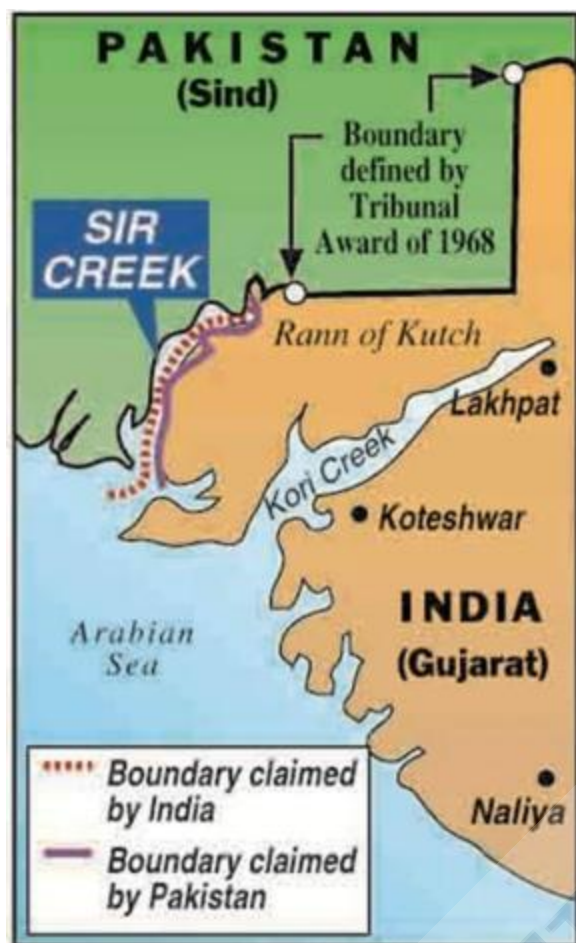Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.
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IE Map/B.K. Sharma Source: IE Map

- Location: It is a fluctuating 96-km tidal estuary along the India-Pakistan border.

  - It flows into the Arabian Sea and divides the Rann of Kutch (India) from Sindh (Pakistan).

- It was initially known as Ban Ganga.

- It is a marshy, sparsely populated, and hard-to-police region that floods during the monsoon.

- Strategic Importance:

  - Sir Creek is vital to Pakistan's defence of Karachi, its largest city and main economic hub.

  - Pakistan has built bunkers, radars, and forward bases capable of drone and infantry operations.

  - India maintains a strong military presence to deter threats.

  - The creek could serve as a launchpad for terrorist infiltration, as seen during the 2008 Mumbai attacks, when terrorists arrived by boat.

- Economic Importance:

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○ The region is believed to contain untapped oil and gas reserves, valuable to both India and Pakistan.

○ It is home to important fishing grounds, vital for fishermen in Gujarat and Sindh.

● Nature of the Border Dispute

○ Pakistan claims the entire creek, while India asserts that the boundary should run along the mid-channel.

○ India bases its claim on the Thalweg principle, which sets a boundary along the navigable channel of a waterway.

○ Pakistan rejects this, arguing the creek is not navigable, so the principle does not apply.

● Challenges: The absence of a clear border leads to frequent arrests of fishermen who inadvertently cross into the other country's waters.

○ The boundary demarcation affects the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of both countries in the Arabian Sea, influencing rights over marine resources up to 200 nautical miles.

New National Industrial Classification (NIC) 2025

News: Recently, MoSPI unveiled the new National Industrial Classification (NIC) 2025 during the 75th NSS anniversary and World Statistics Day in Udaipur.

About New National Industrial Classification (NIC) 2025

Source – DD News

● The National Industrial Classification (NIC) 2025 is a six-digit system for classifying all economic activities in India, replacing NIC 2008 five-digit system.

● Launched by: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)

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- The classification system was first introduced in 1962 and later revised in 1970, 1987, 1990, 1998, 2004 and 2008.

  ○ NIC 2025 is the latest national standard for classifying economic activities.

- Aim: Its aim is to reflect India's evolving economic structure, improve data granularity and align with the UN's International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) Revision 5.

- The revision was carried out under the guidance of the Expert Committee for Revision of Economic Classifications (ECREC) comprising subject matter experts and industry representatives.

- Feature of NIC 2025

  ○ Enhanced classification of intermediation services: New classes have been created across multiple sections to reflect the growing role of intermediaries in sectors such as power, retail, logistics, healthcare, education, real estate, and food services.

  ○ Environmental and green economy integration: Expanded coverage of carbon capture, waste management, and environmental remediation activities, with better alignment to SDGs framework.

  ○ Digital economy representation: Cloud infrastructure, blockchain, platform-based services, and web search portals are distinctly classified, reflecting the evolving nature of the digital economy.

  ○ Classification is technology agnostic: In general, distinction of activities is not made based on whether an activity is carried out by means of traditional or modern production techniques.

e-Jagriti Platform

News: e-Jagriti portal is in the news as an AI-enabled consumer grievance platform registering over 2.75 lakh users and enabling global access.

**About e-Jagriti Platform**

Source – Ministry of Consumer Affairs

- Full form: e- Justice And Grievance Redressal through Information Technology and Innovation

- It is a unified, AI-enabled digital grievance redressal platform that integrates all consumer dispute resolution systems into one seamless portal.

- Initiative by: It is an initiative of the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution.

- Launched on: It was launched on January 1, 2025.

- Aim: The platform aims to provide faster, transparent, accessible, and paperless consumer justice across India and abroad, especially empowering MSME consumers, households, and NRIs with real-time, technology-enabled grievance redressal.

- Key features

    ○ It integrates legacy systems such as Online Case Monitoring System (OCMS), e-Daakhil, NCDRC CMS, and CONFONET into a single interface that supports e-filing, digital scrutiny, electronic notices, and virtual hearings.

    ○ It offers global accessibility through secure OTP-based registration, enabling complaints from abroad, digital or offline fee payments, encrypted document exchange, and real-time case tracking.

    ○ It uses an AI-powered, multilingual interface with chatbot assistance, voice-to-text tools, and accessibility support for elderly and differently-abled consumers.

    ○ It supports role-based dashboards for judges, advocates, and litigants, aiding efficient hearings

- Key benefits of e-Jagriti include:

    ○ Global Accessibility: NRIs and citizens can file and manage cases from any location, with secure end-to-end encryption and role-based permissions.

    ○ Efficiency and Speed: Automated workflows, real-time updates via SMS/email and virtual hearings have contributed to disposal rates exceeding 100% in 10 states and the NCDRC recently.

    ○ Inclusivity: Features like multilingual interfaces and accessibility tools make it user-friendly for diverse demographics.

    ○ Secure Transactions: Integration with Bharat Kosh and PayGov gateways ensures hassle-free fee payments.

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Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary

News: Over three decades after tigers became extinct in Gujarat, the arrival of tiger in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary has sparked fresh optimism about reviving the species in Gujarat.

About Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary
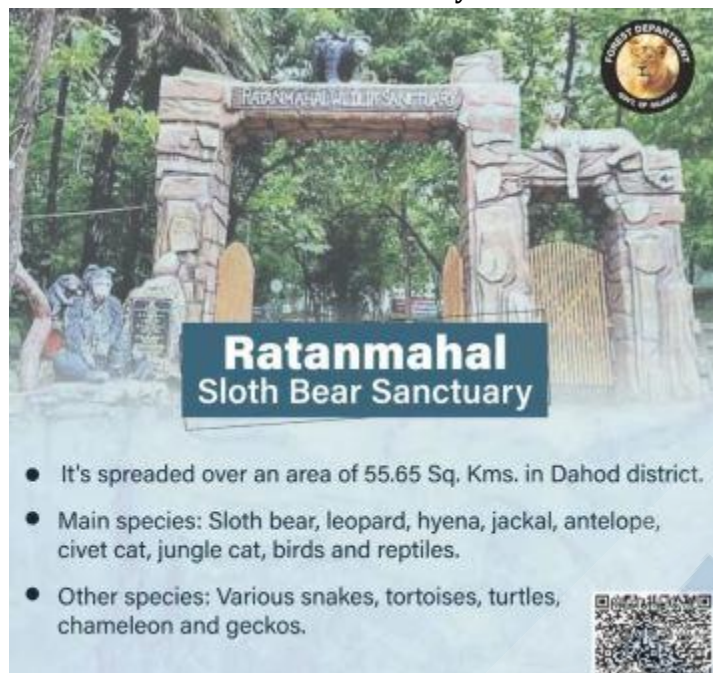
Source – Gujarat Tourism

- Location: The Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary is a protected forest area located in the Dahod district of Gujarat, near the border with Madhya Pradesh.

- The sanctuary was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in March 1982.

- The sanctuary harbours the highest population of sloth bears in Gujarat.

  - It is known by an alternate name of "Ratanmahal Sloth Bear Sanctuary" also.

- Rivers: The forests of Ratanmahal form the catchment area of the Panam River.

- Forest Types: The forests of the sanctuary include dry teak forests at the foothills.

  - Mixed deciduous forests occupy the central parts of the sanctuary.

- Flora: The sanctuary contains species such as teak, dudhlo, sadad, timru, amla, bamboo, dhavdo, kakadiyo, mahuda, tanach, charoli, ber, jamun, and khakhro.

- Fauna: Sloth bear, Leopards, Striped hyenas, jackals, four-horned antelope, Mongoose and porcupine species, Civet cats, jungle cats and Hanuman langurs are found here.

  - A total of 147 bird species have been recorded in Ratanmahal Sanctuary.

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Trade Intelligence and Analytics (TIA) Portal

News: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry launched the Trade Intelligence & Analytics (TIA) Portal in New Delhi.

About Trade Intelligence and Analytics (TIA) Portal

Source: ZEE News

- Launched by: The Trade Intelligence & Analytics (TIA) Portal was launched by Minister of Commerce and Industry

- Aim: The portal aims to make trade data more transparent, accessible, and useful for stakeholders across India.

  - It seeks to help importers, exporters, MSMEs, and startups make informed and data-driven decisions.

- Objective: The portal has been developed to support evidence-based policymaking and targeted sectoral interventions.

  - It consolidates global and bilateral trade data into a single platform to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of trade analysis.

  - It helps identify market diversification opportunities, new product potential, and missed opportunities in India's trade basket.

  - It enables policymakers to better understand trade flows with over 220 countries and respond quickly to global developments.

- Features:

  - The portal integrates multiple global and bilateral databases, including UN Comtrade, into one centralised hub.

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- It offers 270+ interactive visualisations across 28+ dashboards covering India-level, global, and bilateral trade insights.

- The platform offers intuitive visualisations, advanced drill-down tools, and automated workflows to improve user experience and operational efficiency.

- The Trade Watch Tower identifies champion products by scanning global demand and mapping India's supply capabilities.

- The portal replaces older platforms such as Niryat Portal, Tradestat Portal, and the Commerce Monitoring Dashboard.

- It automates major workflows such as the Monthly Trade Report (300+ pages) and surge monitoring reports

- API-based automated data collation enables easy extraction and download of country and commodity data.

- Dedicated dashboards track PLI commodities, critical minerals, and trade surges with FTA and non-FTA partners.

- Tariff Analysis and Target Monitoring dashboards are under development to further enhance analytical ability.

- Advanced trade indices such as the Trade Complementarity Index, Revealed Comparative Advantage, and Trade Intensity Index support deeper trade analysis.

- The portal provides tools for comparing macroeconomic, trade, and investment indicators across countries.

- It is a cost-effective, open-source solution with no licensing costs and minimal server requirements.]

- By integrating all trade analytics into one system, the portal enhances data-driven decision-making and strengthens India's ability to respond to global trade trends.

Talaq-e-Hasan

News: Talaq-e-Hasan is in news as the Supreme Court hears petitions challenging its validity and questions this practice in modern society.

About Talaq-e-Hasan

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Source – BNB Legal

- Talaq-e-Hasan is a traditional, extrajudicial, revocable Islamic divorce that only men can use under recognised Muslim personal law.

- It is one of the two subtypes of Talaq-ul-Sunnat and the other subtype is called Talaq-e-Ahsan.

- Process of Talaq-e-Hasan

  - In Talaq-e-Hasan, the husband pronounces "talaq" once during a period when the wife is not menstruating (*tuhr*).

  - After this first pronouncement, there is a waiting period until her next menstrual cycle.

  - If reconciliation happens during this time, the divorce process stops.

  - If the couple does not reconcile, the husband repeats the talaq in the second menstrual cycle, and again in the third cycle if separation is still desired.

  - After the third pronouncement, the divorce under Talaq-e-Hasan becomes final and irrevocable.

- Different from Triple talaq

  - Triple talaq or Talaq-e-Biddat allowed a man to divorce his wife by pronouncing "talaq" three times in one sitting.

  - Triple talaq was banned by the government in 2019 as an instant, irrevocable form of divorce.

  - Unlike triple talaq, Talaq-e-Hasan has a waiting period and allows reconciliation before divorce becomes final after the third pronouncement.

Dolphin-Assisted Cast Net Fishing

News: Scientists and conservationists launched an international project on cooperation between wild dolphins and fishers in Ashtamudi Lake, Kerala.
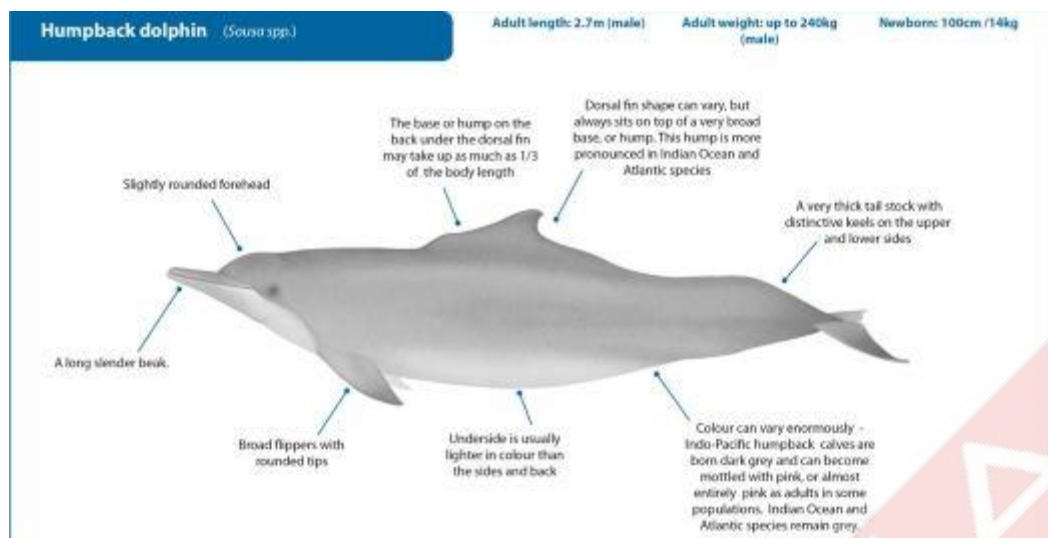
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About Dolphin-Assisted Cast Net Fishing

Source – News Scientist

- Dolphin-assisted cast net fishing is a unique, cooperative fishing technique where wild dolphins and human fishermen work together to increase fish catch efficiency.

- Mechanism used

  - The Humpback dolphins rush and zigzag towards mullet (medium-sized, silvery fish), tossing fish into the air and chasing them towards the shore.

  - Traditional cast net fishermen closely watch these movements and cast their nets in front of the advancing dolphins, matching the direction and timing of the chase.

  - This coordinated behaviour creates a form of mutualism, where fishermen get a much better catch of mullet, while dolphins also benefit through more successful foraging on their preferred prey.

  - This mutualism between dolphins and fishermen has been reported from Brazil and Myanmar also.

About Humpback Dolphins

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Source – Int. Whaling Comm.

- Type of species: There are four recognized species of humpback dolphins –

  - Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*)

  - Indian Ocean humpback dolphin (*S. plumbea*)

  - Atlantic humpback dolphin (*S. teuszi*)

  - Australian humpback dolphin (*S. sahulensis*)

- Habitat: They are found in relatively shallow nearshore waters throughout their range which includes most of the coastlines in Australia, Africa and Asia.

  - The Indian Ocean humpback dolphin (*Sousa plumbea*) is particularly seen along the Kerala coast.

- Conservation Status of Indian Ocean Humpback Dolphin

  - It is considered as 'Endangered' by the ICUN.

  - It is within Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

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Conservation Status of Humpback Dolphins
- Atlantic humpback dolphin – critically endangered
- Indian ocean humpback dolphin – endangered
- Indo-Pacific humpback dol-phin- vulnerable
- Australian humpback dolphin – vulnerable

Earth System Sciences Council (ESSC)

News: Earth System Sciences Council (ESSC) is in the news after its first General Body meeting reviewed the merged 5 MoES institutes.

About Earth System Sciences Council (ESSC)

Source – PIB

- The ESSC is an umbrella body unifying five institutes of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) for streamlined earth sciences governance.

- Aim: It aims to improve coordination, reduce administrative overlap, streamline governance, and enhance visibility of India's earth science initiatives.

- It was formally registered in December 2023.

- Headed by:

    a. The Union Minister of Earth Sciences, serves as President of the Council.

    b. The Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) heads the ESSC.

- It supports the government's broader approach of "minimum government, maximum governance."

- Five Institutes constituting the ESSC are –

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a. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune

b. National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS), Thiruvananthapuram

c. National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai

d. National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa

e. Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad

World Urbanisation Prospects 2025 Report

News: Recently UN DESA released the new World Urbanization Prospects 2025 report using the Degree of Urbanization methodology.

About World Urbanisation Prospects 2025 Report

 Source – UN

- It gives population estimates and projections using the Degree of Urbanization.

- Prepared by: It is prepared by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

- Global findings

  ○ Urban growth pattern: In 2025, cities house 45 per cent of world's population, towns 36 per cent and rural areas 19 per cent.

  ○ Rising megacities:

    ○ The number of megacities (over 10 million people) increased from 8 in 1975 to 33 in 2025, with 19 located in Asia.

    ○ Jakarta (Indonesia) is the most populous city, followed by Dhaka (Bangladesh), Tokyo (Japan), and New Delhi (India).

  ○ Dominance of small and medium cities: Around 96 per cent of the world's 12,000 cities have fewer than one million inhabitants, and 81 per cent have fewer than 2.5 lakh people.

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- Rural areas remain the most common settlement type in 62 countries today, down from 116 in 1975.

  - By 2050, this number is projected to decline further to 44 countries.

- India specific findings

  - High town population: India has 44 per cent of its population living in towns.

  - Large town population globally: India and China together account for over 1.2 billion town dwellers, which is more than 40 per cent of the world's total town population.

  - Over one-third of shrinking cities are in China and 17% in India

  - Rapid urban growth projection: India is among seven countries—along with Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia—that will contribute over half of the projected 986 million increase in global city dwellers by 2050.

Himalayan Black Bear

News: Recently, the Uttarakhand government ordered shoot-at-sight action against Himalayan black bears in Pauri district after a surge in attacks.

About Himalayan Black Bear (Ursus thibetanus laniger)

Source – iStock

- The Himalayan black bear is a forest-dwelling bear species of the Himalayan region.

- Habitat: It lives in broadleaf and coniferous forests between altitudes of 1,200 and 3,300 metres.

- Distribution:

  - It occurs along the Himalayas from Jammu and Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh and in some foothill and northeastern forests.

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○ It also occurs in warmer forests below the Himalayas, from Rajaji National Park and Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttarakhand to Mizoram.

● **Keystone species:** It is a keystone species that acts as a primary seed disperser, which is crucial for maintaining the stability of the Himalayan ecosystem.

● **Physical characteristics:** It has a glossy black coat and a distinctive white V-shaped patch on its chest.

● **Diet:** It is omnivorous and eats a variety of plant material and insects, feeding heavily before winter to build body fat.

● **Behaviour:** It is largely solitary and nocturnal, is an excellent climber and swimmer and does not hibernate in warmer areas.

● **Protection status**

○ It is classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

○ It is added in the CITES Appendix I

○ It is mentioned in Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

● **Threat:** It faces habitat loss from human activities and climate-change-driven changes in hibernation, which are increasing human–bear conflict.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2024

News: Michelle Bachelet received the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize (2024) for Peace, at a ceremony held on November 20, 2025.

About Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

Source – ET

● It is an annual award given to individuals or organisations that promote global peace, disarmament and development.

● It is also known as the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development.

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- Established by: It established by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust in 1986.
  - It was instituted in memory of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- Awarded for : The prize honours creative efforts to promote international peace and disarmament, racial equality, goodwill and harmony among nations, development cooperation and scientific discoveries for human betterment, including work towards a new international economic order.
- Prize components: It consists of a monetary award of 25 lakh rupees along with a formal citation.

About Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2024

- Recipient: Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- Reason for the prize: She was honoured for her lifelong work for human rights, gender equality, social protection for women and children, and global peace.
- Presented by: It was presented by the chairperson of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.

ASHA AI Platform

News: The ASHA AI Platform is an innovative solution launched by the Indian government to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the Public Distribution System (PDS).

### About ASHA AI Platform

Source – PIB

- The Anna Sahayata Holistic AI Solution (ASHA) is an AI-based platform launched by the Union Food and Public Distribution Ministry.
- Developed by: It has been developed in partnership with the Wadhwani Foundation and is supported by the India AI Mission through Bhashini's multilingual AI infrastructure.
- Aim: To enhance transparency and service delivery in the Public Distribution System (PDS).

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- Purpose: It enables PDS beneficiaries to share feedback on ration distribution through AI-enabled automated calls in their preferred language.

- Key Functions: The system collects feedback on whether beneficiaries received their full entitlement, the quality of foodgrains, and any issues faced at Fair Price Shops.

- It uses multilingual translation, sentiment analysis, automated grievance categorisation and real-time dashboards for administrators.

- Beneficiary Reach: The system currently reaches around 20 lakh beneficiaries every month across India, improving the scale and efficiency of feedback collection.

BIRSA 101

News: India launched India's first indigenous "CRISPR" based gene therapy for Sickle Cell Disease.

About BIRSA 101
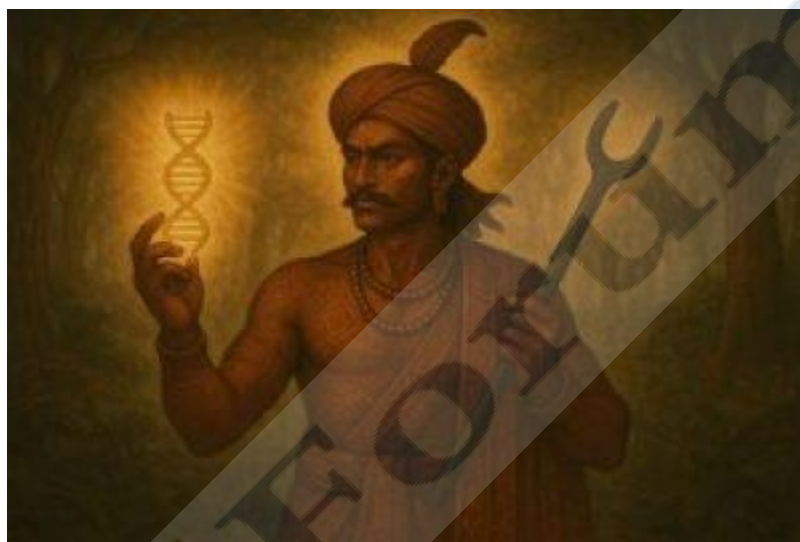
Source – Genetic Education

- BIRSA 101 is India's first indigenous CRISPR-based gene therapy.

- Aim: It is developed specifically for treating Sickle Cell Disease, a condition that heavily affects India's tribal population.

- Named after: The therapy is named BIRSA 101 in honour of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, a revered tribal freedom fighter, whose 150th birth anniversary was recently celebrated.

- Developed at: CSIR–Institute of Genomics & Integrative Biology (IGIB), showcasing India's scientific capability in advanced therapeutics.

- Technology used: It uses CRISPR technology that functions like "precise genetic surgery," capable of correcting the mutation responsible for Sickle Cell Disease.

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- ○ It has potential applications for treating several other hereditary disorders.
- Affordable: The therapy is designed to be affordable, in contrast to global gene therapies that cost ₹20–25 crore (over 3 million dollars).
- A formal technology transfer agreement was signed between CSIR-IGIB and the Serum Institute of India (SIIPL) to scale up and manufacture BIRSA 101.
  - ○ This partnership ensures affordability, scalability, and real-world clinical deployment.
- Significance: Since Sickle Cell Disease disproportionately affects tribal populations in central and eastern India, BIRSA 101 holds special national importance for improving tribal health outcomes.
  - ○ The launch of BIRSA 101 marks the beginning of India's decisive journey toward achieving a Sickle Cell–Free India by 2047, aligning with the Prime Minister's national mission.

Kurdistan Region

News: The Turkish government is set up to oversee a new peace initiative with Kurdish leaders kept in prison.

About Kurdistan Region

Source – Britannica

- Kurdistan is a broadly defined geographic region traditionally inhabited mainly by Kurds.
- Spread: It consists of an extensive plateau and mountain area, spread over large parts of eastern Turkey, northern Iraq and western Iran and smaller parts of northern Syria and Armenia.
- Mountains: It refers to an area of Kurdish settlement that roughly includes the mountain systems of the Zagros and the eastern extension of the Taurus.
- Rivers: The Tigris and Greater Zab rivers flow through the region, supporting agriculture and settlements.
- The region is significant due to its abundant reserves of oil.

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Radio Galaxies

News: Researchers have successfully recreated the complex structure of the newly discovered Twin Radio Galaxies (TRGs), revealing insights that are transforming our understanding of the physics behind the jets emitted by these systems.

About Radio Galaxies

Source: Space.com

- Radio galaxies are galaxies that emit exceptionally strong radio waves, far brighter than typical galaxies.

- Their radio emission comes from giant lobes of plasma that extend far beyond the galaxy's visible stars.

- Structure of Radio Galaxies: At the core of a radio galaxy lies an AGN powered by a supermassive black hole.

  ○ Gas falling into the black hole heats up and forms an accretion disk.

  ○ Some of this material is funneled into relativistic jets, which inflate the radio lobes.

- Key Features:

  ○ Radio lobes can span millions of light-years, making them among the largest structures in the universe.

  ○ They usually appear in pairs, positioned on opposite sides of the galaxy.

  ○ The radiation is produced by synchrotron emission, electrons moving near light speed in magnetic fields.

- Types of Radio Galaxies:

  ○ Broad-line radio galaxies: Broad-line radio galaxies show broad emission lines of elements such as hydrogen, oxygen, and silicon in their optical spectra.

    ○ These broad lines are produced by fast-moving gas located close to the active galactic nucleus (AGN).

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- Narrow-line radio galaxies: Narrow-line radio galaxies show only narrow emission lines, which indicate slower-moving or cooler gas in their environment.

  - The narrow lines suggest that the emitting gas is located farther away from the black hole compared to the gas in broad-line radio galaxies.

- Why They Matter

  - It reveals how supermassive black holes interact with their host galaxies.

  - It act as beacons detectable across vast cosmic distances.

  - It help astronomers study: Galaxy evolution, Intergalactic magnetic fields and High-energy particle physics.

Global Methane Status Report 2025

News: The Global Methane Status Report was released by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) at COP30 in Belem.

About Global Methane Status Report 2025

Source: CCAC

- The report provides updates on global progress on methane mitigation and the remaining work needed to achieve the Global Methane Pledge, as well as the potential for further ambition.

- Released by: It is released by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC).

- Finding of the report related to India:

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- ○ India as a Hotspot: India has emerged as a global hotspot for methane emissions due to crop-residue (stubble) burning.

- ○ Global Rank: India is the world's third-largest methane emitter after China and the United States.

  - ○ India is responsible for nearly 9% of global methane emissions.

- ○ Major Sources: India's main methane sources are livestock (enteric fermentation and manure) and rice cultivation.

  - ○ Crop-residue burning is becoming a major and fast-growing methane hotspot in India.

- ○ Waste Management Issues: India faces waste-management challenges that significantly increase methane emissions.

  - ○ Methane emissions from waste burning in India rose from 4.5 Mt in 1995 to 7.4 Mt in 2020 – a 64% increase.

- ○ Agriculture Emissions (2020): India generated about 20 Mt of methane from agriculture in 2020, representing 12% of global agricultural methane emissions, one of the highest shares worldwide.

  - ○ Methane emissions from rice cultivation in India are projected to rise by 8% between 2020 and 2030.

- ○ Energy Sector Emissions (2020): India produced around 4.5 Mt of methane from the energy sector in 2020.

- ○ Loopholes: India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) do not outline actions to reduce methane from agriculture.

  - ○ India's national statement at COP30 made no mention of methane, despite rising emissions.

- ○ Suggestions: Experts emphasize that controlling stubble burning would reduce methane and harmful particulate pollution simultaneously.

  - ○ Experts call for a focused programme across affected states to address both climate and air-pollution impacts.

- Findings in the Global Context

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- ○ Global Methane Levels: Global methane emissions currently total about 360 million tonnes per year.

- ○ G20 Contribution: The G20 group, including India, is responsible for about 65% of global methane emissions.

- ○ Global Waste Burning Trend: Global methane emissions from waste burning increased from 56 Mt in 1995 to 80 Mt in 2020 – a 43% rise.

- ○ Future Outlook: Despite rising methane levels, the report suggests emissions could start to decline by 2030 with strong action.

  - ○ Reducing methane is highlighted as one of the most immediate and effective steps to slow the climate crisis.

  - ○ The report also identifies 11 active global programmes aimed at reducing methane emissions.

  - ○ Cutting methane emissions also helps reduce crop losses, supporting agricultural productivity and food security.

Veerangana Jhalkari Bai Koli

News– The Delhi government has decided to include Veerangana Jhalkari Bai Koli in its scheme that celebrates the birth and death anniversaries of prominent personalities.

Source- ETV bharat

About Veerangana Jhalkari Bai Koli

- ● Birth: 22 November 1830, Bhojla village near Jhansi (UP).

- ● Background: Born into a Dalit Koli family; known for exceptional bravery from childhood.

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- Marriage: Married Puran Kori, a soldier in the army of Raja Gangadhar Rao (husband of Rani Lakshmibai).

- Association: Close aide and soldier in the army of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi.

- Role in 1857:

  - Served in the Durga Dal (women's army) of Jhansi.

  - Became a body double of Rani Lakshmibai due to her resemblance.

  - Played a crucial role in diverting British forces by disguising herself as the queen, helping the real queen escape.

SARAL SIMS

News– The Ministry of Steel launched the SARAL Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) portal for simplified import registration.

About SARAL SIMS

- Purpose & Coverage- SARAL SIMS streamlines SIMS registration for small steel imports and for exports-related procurement under Advance Authorisation, Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and Export Oriented Unit (EOU) schemes.

- Applicability- It covers iron and steel items under Chapters 72, 73, and 86 of the Indian Trade Classification (Harmonized System), 2022.

- Single Annual Declaration- Importers need to declare only the total intended annual import quantity once, after which a single SARAL SIMS number is issued and can be used for multiple consignments in that financial year.

- Small-Import Category Limit- Allows consignments up to 10 MT, with an annual cap of 500 MT for FY 2025–26 and 1,000 MT from FY 2026–27 onwards.

- No Limit for Export-Linked Imports- Imports for export production via SEZ, EOU, or Advance Authorisation routes carry no quantity restriction under SARAL SIMS.

- Validity, Compliance & Threshold Rule

  - SARAL SIMS number remains valid till 30th April of the following fiscal year.

  - Annual Return must be filed by 30th April, detailing actual imports.

  - If imports exceed 1,000 MT in a year, the importer must shift to regular SIMS for the rest of that year and cannot revert to SARAL SIMS.

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