Factly Weekly

Compilation

2026

For UPSC CSE Prelims Exam

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New Country Partnership Framework (NCPF)

News: India and the World Bank Group announced a new Country Partnership Framework to support India's next phase of growth aligned with Viksit Bharat.

About New Country Partnership Framework (NCPF)

Figure 1. Source – World Bank

- The New Country Partnership Framework is a strategic partnership **between India and the World Bank Group for the period 2026–2031.**

- **Key aspects of NCPF**

  ○ **Growth and vision alignment:** The framework aims to accelerate India's growth while supporting the national vision of Viksit Bharat.

  ○ **Financing support:** It provides **annual financing of $8–10 billion over five** years using the World Bank Group's full range of instruments and expertise.

  ○ **Global jobs strategy:** It applies the World Bank Group's global jobs strategy based on physical and human infrastructure, regulatory certainty, and risk-management tools.

  ○ **Priority sectors:** The framework focuses on **infrastructure and energy, agribusiness, healthcare, tourism, and value-added manufacturing to generate jobs at scale.**

  ○ **Private sector-led jobs:** It prioritises job creation by upgrading skills, reducing barriers for small and medium enterprises, and expanding opportunities for youth and women.

  ○ **Strategic outcomes:** It targets rural prosperity and resilience, urban transformation, investment in people, and strengthening energy security, core infrastructure, and climate resilience.

Buckwheat

News: Buckwheat has regained attention due to its promotion with apiculture in Ladakh and its seeds being sent to the International Space Station.

About Buckwheat

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Figure 2. Source – Mongabay

- Buckwheat is a **pseudo-cereal seed crop** known for **high nutrition** and its **ability to grow in harsh mountain conditions**.

- **Naming**: The name buckwheat is derived from the **Anglo-Saxon** words *boc* meaning **beech** and *whoet* meaning **wheat**, as its **seeds resemble beech nuts**.

- **Botanical Aspect:** Buckwheat is a **dicot herbaceous plant** belonging to the **Polygonaceae family** and is botanically related to **sorrel and rhubarb**.

- **Varieties:** The **two** main varieties of buckwheat are-

  - **Common buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*)**

  - **Tartary or Himalayan tartary buckwheat (*Fagopyrum tartaricum*).**

- **Cultivation in India:** Buckwheat is widely grown in **Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh**, and sporadically in the Nilgiris and Palani hills.

- **Key features**

  - It adapts well to **poor soils, high altitudes, and short growing seasons.**

  - It's an excellent **source of complex carbohydrates that delay digestion**, extend satiety, slow down glucose release and provide sustained energy throughout the day.

  - Additionally, it contains notable amounts of **fibre, protein, vitamins** (B-complex vitamins like niacin, folate, and riboflavin), and **minerals** (magnesium, manganese, and phosphorus).

  - It is a **gluten-free crop with a low glycaemic index.**

- **Uses**: Buckwheat is used as flour in **porridge, pancakes, and noodles**, and its **flour** is a common ingredient in many fasting recipes in India.

- **Significance**

  - **Environmental**: It supports **mountain agriculture and beekeeping** in cold and marginal regions.

  - **Space Agriculture**: **Ladakh-grown** buckwheat seeds are being studied on the **ISS for future space food potential.**

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Key Facts about Latvia

News: In Baltic nation of Latvia, the Latvian Environment and Meteorology Centre has reported that country recorded a temperature of -32 degrees Celsius recently.

Key Facts about Latvia

Figure 3. Source – Latvia

- **Location:** Latvia is a country in the **Baltic region of northern Europe**.
- **Boundaries:** It is one of the **three Baltic states**, along with **Estonia to the north** and **Lithuania to the south**.
  - It borders **Russia to the east** and **Belarus to the southeast** and shares a maritime border with **Sweden to the west**.
- **Capital: Riga** – the **largest city in the Baltics.**
  - It is famous for its **stunning Art Nouveau (Jugendstil) architecture** and a **UNESCO World Heritage medieval Old Town**.
- **Climate:** Latvia has a **temperate climate**.
- **Rivers:** The **longest river on Latvian territory** is the **Gauja (452 km)**.
  - The **longest river flowing through Latvian territory** is the **Daugava**, which has a **total length of 1,005 km** of which **352 km is on Latvian territory.**
- **Peaks:** Latvia's highest point is **Gaiziņkalns, 311.6 m (1,022 ft).**
- **Coastlines:** The length of Latvia's **Baltic coastline** is **494 km**.
  - An **inlet of the Baltic Sea,** the shallow **Gulf of Riga** is situated in the northwest of the country.
- **Political System:** It is a **parliamentary republic**. The head of state is the President, and the **government is led by the Prime Minister**.
- **Independence:** Latvia **first** declared independence in **1918**.
  - It was forcibly incorporated into the **Soviet Union from 1940-1941** and **1944-1991.**

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- ○ It restored its **independence in 1991** after the "**Singing Revolution**" and the peaceful **Baltic Way protest**.
- It is a member of:
  - ○ European Union
  - ○ Eurozone
  - ○ NATO
  - ○ The Council of Europe
  - ○ The United Nations
  - ○ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **Traditions:** Rich folklore, with over 1.2 million folk songs (Dainas), celebrating nature, life cycles, and mythology. Midsummer's Eve (Jāņi) is the most important annual celebration.

NPS Swasthya Pension Scheme (NSPS)

News: **PFRDA** launches **NPS Swasthya Pension Scheme (NSPS)** on Pilot Basis under its **Regulatory Sandbox Framework** to integrate **healthcare financing** with **pension savings** under the National Pension System (NPS).

About NPS Swasthya Pension Scheme (NSPS)

Source – PIB

- **Nature:** Sector-specific **contributory scheme** under the **Multiple Scheme Framework (MSF)** of NPS
- **Coverage:** Designed to meet **out-patient (OPD)** and **in-patient medical expenses**
- **Eligibility:** Open to **all Indian citizens** on a **voluntary basis**
- **Implementation:** Launched by **Pension Funds (PFs)** with prior PFRDA approval

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- **Pilot Mode:** Limited duration with **restricted number of subscribers** (Proof of Concept – PoC)

Key Features of National Pension System (NPS)

- **Mandatory Requirement:** Subscriber must have a **Common Scheme Account under NPS**

- **Contributions:**

  - Subscribers can contribute **any amount** as per existing NPS (non-government) norms

  - Subscribers **above 40 years** (excluding government employees) may transfer **up to 30%** of their corpus from the Common Scheme Account to NSPS

- **Withdrawals for Medical Needs:**

  - **Partial withdrawal up to 25%** of own contributions for medical expenses

  - **No cap on number of withdrawals**, subject to a **minimum corpus of ₹50,000**

  - In **critical in-patient cases**, if expenses exceed **70% of corpus**, **100% premature withdrawal** is permitted

- **Relaxed Norms:** Certain provisions of **PFRDA (Exits and Withdrawals under NPS) Regulations, 2015** have been relaxed for the pilot

- **Claim Settlement & Safeguards**

  - Withdrawn amounts are paid **directly to Health Benefit Administrators (HBA), TPAs, or hospitals** against valid claims

  - **Unutilised balance**, if any, is transferred back to the subscriber's **Common Scheme Account**

- **Institutional Collaboration**

  - Pension Funds may collaborate with **FinTech companies and health service administrators** for effective implementation

Orange Economy

News: India's creative industry found mention in Union Finance Budget speech, as she announced plans to boost the country's 'orange economy'.

About Orange Economy

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Source – Times Now

- It is also known as the **creative economy**.

- It is the **knowledge-based economic activities** upon which the '**creative industries'** are based.

- It is a **production model** where **goods and services have intellectual value** because they are the product of the **ideas and expertise** of their creators.

- The **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** defines it as an **evolving concept** which builds on the **interplay between human creativity and ideas and intellectual property, knowledge and technology.**

    - The **first mandate on creative economies** came from the **UNCTAD XI's outcome document** – the **Sao Paulo consensus – in 2004**.

- **Creative Industries under Orange Economy**

    - Advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, computer games, electronic publishing, and TV/radio

- People **conceptualize and arrange this work**, the **produce and/or publish** it and **get paid** for it.

- This is **no different** from other production processes, **except** that the major input stems from original or copyrightable intellectual property (IP).

- According to **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),** the Orange Economy accounts for **3% of global gross domestic product (GDP)** and **30 million jobs worldwide**.

India's Orange Economy

- India's **Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) sector** is a growing industry projected to **require two million professionals by 2030**.

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- Economic Survey 2025-26 has stated that **revenue from gaming in 2024** was around **Rs 232 billion**, while **animation and VFX amounted** to around **Rs 103 billion.**

- **Live entertainment** accounted for **more than Rs 100 billion in 2024**, with strong spillovers to **tourism and urban services**.

- **Budget 2026-27:** Union government has proposed to **support the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies, Mumbai**, in setting up **AVGC content creator labs in 15,000 secondary schools** all over the country and **500 colleges.**

Moltbook Platform

News: Moltbook is in the news because it has drawn attention to autonomous communication among AI agents on a public platform without direct human participation.

About Moltbook Platform

Figure 4. Source – NDTV

- Moltbook is an **online platform** where artificial intelligence agents interact with one another in a shared digital environment without human users.

- **Launched by:** Moltbook was launched in **January 2026 by developer Matt Schlicht.**

- **Working mechanism**

  o **Only autonomous AI agents** are permitted to register, post, comment, and upvote content on the platform, while humans are limited to observing interactions.

  o After a human owner connects an AI agent to Moltbook, the agent operates independently using APIs and programmed behaviour without continuous human input.

- **Key features**

  o **Platform Structure**: It follows a Reddit-like structure with topic-based communities known as submolts, which are created and managed by AI agents.

  o **Discussion Scope**: AI agents exchange views on technical and philosophical topics based on their training data and interaction patterns.

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- **Adaptive Interaction**: Agents modify their responses over time by remixing ideas from discussions, resulting in debate-like conversation threads.

- **Concern:** Security concerns exist because autonomous AI agents connected through APIs and external services may face vulnerabilities that could expose credentials or private information if safeguards are not enforced.

Grain ATMs

News: Some beneficiaries of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Bihar will soon be able to procure grains from machines dubbed "grain ATMs" or Annapurti.

About Grain ATMs

HOW IT WORKS

➤ Beneficiary has to enter his/her Aadhaar card or ration card details on the machine that has a touchscreen attached to it

➤ On authentication, the food grain will get filled in bags kept under the machine

Figure 5. Source: TOI

- A grain ATM or Annapurti (meaning "provider of grain") is an **automated machine** that dispenses food grains (wheat and/or rice).

- **Developed by: World Food Programme (WFP)** has developed the technology and **has worked in collaboration with the Food Corporation of India and various state governments.**

- **Aim:** To enhance food security in the state by ensuring that PDS beneficiaries **can access their rations at any time, reducing the need for long waits and manual distribution issues.**

- **Features:**

  - It can **release 50 kg of grain** in **five minutes.**

  - It can **work 24×7 like ATMs.**

  - It is **designed to consume only 0.6 watts per hour** and **can be powered through solar energy.**

  - It also **requires internet connectivity** to access the PDS database and **the individual profile of a Below Poverty Line (BPL) cardholder.**

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● **Working of the Grain ATM:**

　○ Once a PDS beneficiary swipes their **beneficiary or grain ATM card** on a PoS machine, linked to the ration card or to their Aadhar card.

　○ The beneficiary is **asked to select the grain option and its quantity.**

　○ They **must also undergo Aadhar-based biometric authentication.**

　○ The **maximum limit of grain disbursement** is also **specified.**

　○ Once the grain is dispensed, the beneficiary's PDS data is updated, and a slip is also issued for confirmation and as a physical record.

Cocoa and Cashew Get Budget (2026–27) Boost

News: The Union Budget 2026-27 has also proposed a dedicated programme for Indian cashew and cocoa.

Source – Kisan India

About Cocoa

About	Cocoa is an important **commercial plantation crop, native to Amazon basin of South America.**
Zone	Cocoa grows best in tropical regions between **20° North and 20° South latitude.**
Altitude	Cocoa is grown from **sea level up to about 500 metres above sea level.**
Rainfall	**Minimum rainfall:** 90–100 mm per month
Temperature	● Cocoa grows well within a temperature range of **15°C to 39°C**. ● **Optimum temperature:** Around **25°C.**

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Soil	• Cocoa grows well in **clay loam and sandy loam soils**. • Cocoa can grow in soils with a **pH range of 4.5 to 8.0**, with an optimum range of **6.5 to 7.0**. • Cocoa requires **deep and well-drained soil** for proper root development.
Shed Requirement	Cocoa plants require **shade during the early stages of growth**. Young cocoa plants grow best with about **50% sunlight**.

Cocoa Production in India and World

- **Cocoa cultivating states in India: Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh**, where it is grown **mostly as an intercrop with coconut and arecanut.**

- **Production in India:** Cocoa production in India is currently estimated at around **25,000 to 30,000 tonnes per year**, which is much lower than the domestic demand of about **1.5 lakh tonnes**.

- **Top export destinations of India:** UAE, Netherlands, Japan, Saudi Arabia.

- **Main cocoa producing countries: Ivory Coast, Ghana, Indonesia, Brazil, Nigeria, Cameroon and Malaysia.**

About Cashew

About	Cashew is a cash crop, native to Brazil in Latin America.
Soil	Cashew grows best in well-drained, deep sandy loam soils, though all soils ranging from sandy to laterite are also suitable.
Temperature & Humidity	• 20 to 38 degree celsius, with relative humidity between 60% and 95%. • Extremely low temperatures and frost are harmful to cashew cultivation.
Altitude	It grows from sea level to an altitude of 1,000 m.
Rainfall	2000 to 3500 mm

Cashew Production in India and World

- **Cashew Producing states in India:** Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal.

- **Emerging producing states:** North-Eastern states and parts of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

- **Production: India** stands as the **second largest producer of cashew in the world.**

  ○ India's **annual raw cashew nut (RCN) production** is around **0.7 million tonnes (0.7 mt)**.

- **Main Cashew producing countries**: India, Vietnam, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Tanzania, Benin, Brazil and other countries in East and West Central Africa and South East Asia.

- **Production:** World production of cashews currently **ranges between 720,000 and 790,000 metric tons (kernel basis) per year.**

  ○ **India, with 170,000-195,000 MT of annual production,** ranks first, followed by **Côte d'Ivoire, Vietnam and Tanzania averaging 149,000; 82,000 and 53,000 MT, respectively.**

Al-Jawf Region

News: Al-Jawf region in Saudi Arabia witnessed unusual heavy snowfall and rainfall, covering parts of its desert landscape in white.

About Al-Jawf Region

Figure 6. Source – Govt. of Saudi Arabia

- Al-Jawf Region is a **province in northern Saudi Arabia** and is among the **earliest inhabited regions of the Arabian Peninsula**.

- **Location:** Al-Jawf is located in the **northern part of Saudi Arabia.**

- **Borders:** It borders **Jordan and Iraq**, and is **part of the Arabian Desert**.

- **Climate**: The region is typically **arid**, with **hot summers and mild winters**, characterized by vast stretches of **sandy terrain**.

- **Geographical features**

  ○ The region contains **large lava fields such as Harrat al-Harrat** and several mountains, including Jabal Touqa.

  ○ The **Great Nafud Desert** extends across the region and covers a very large area.

  ○ **Sirhan Valley** is the most important valley and supports agricultural activity in the region.

  ○ **Dumat al-Jandal Lake** is a major physical feature located above sea level.

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- **Cultural Significance:** Al-Jawf has historical and archaeological importance, with **ancient sites such as Al-Rajajil** and ruins from past civilizations, highlighting its long history of human settlement.

Seychelles

News: Seychelles President Dr. Patrick Herminie will be on a state visit to India from February 5 to 10 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
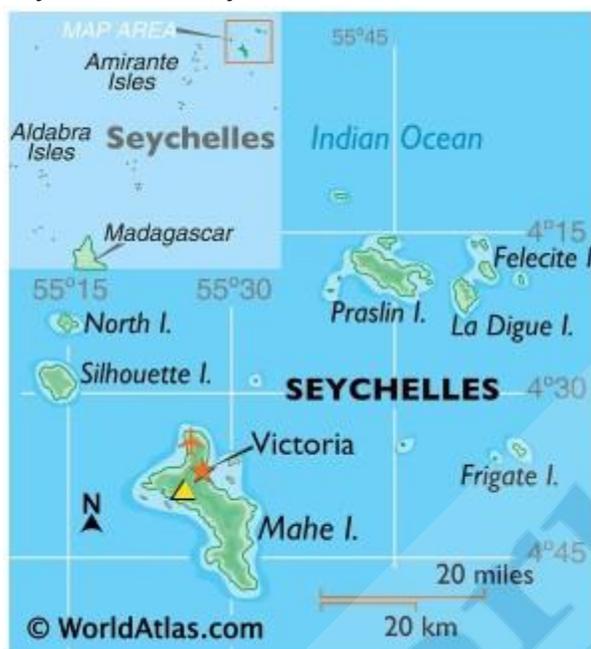
Key Facts about Seychelles

Figure 7. Source – World Atlas

- Seychelles is an **island country** located in the **western Indian Ocean, northeast of Madagascar** and **east of mainland Africa**.

- **Total area:** 446 km2

- **Capital:** Victoria on Mahe

- The country **consists of an archipelago of 115 islands** (only **8** are permanently **inhabited**).

- **Island groups:** It consists of **two Island groups – Inner Island and outer island groups**.

  ○ **Seychelles Inner Islands:** It is also known as the Mahé group of Island and **consists of 45 islands.**

  ○ The largest are **Mahé, Praslin, La Digue and Silhouette Island.**

  ○ They are **surrounded by coral reefs and have narrow coastlines and ranges of hills**.

  ○ **Morne Seychellois** is the **highest peak of the archipelago**.

  ○ **Seychelles Outer Islands:** The Seychelles Outer Islands **are a chain of coral atolls**, such as the **Amirante and Alphonse Islands.** They are **mostly uninhabited.**

- **Flora:** Seychelles has a unique variety of plants such as **Coco de Mer palm, which produces the largest seed in the world and grows only in Seychelles.**

  ○ The islands also have **mangroves, orchids, fruit trees, and many native plants**.

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- **Fauna:** It is home to many rare animals such as **Seychelles sheath-tailed bat, giant Aldabra tortoises**, **Gardiner's frog,** and birds such as the **Seychelles Paradise Flycatcher**, **Magpie Robin**, and **Blue Pigeon**.

- **UNESCO World Heritage Sites:** The **Vallée de Mai on Praslin** with its rare coco-de-mer nuts and the **Aldabra Atoll,** the largest uplifted coral atoll in the world.

Power Gap Index

News: Economic survey 2025-26 has cited data from the Power Gap Index to explain how India is a victim of geopolitics and a strategic power gap and is operating below its full strategic potential.

About Power Gap Index

RANK	TREND	COUNTRY/TERRITORY	COMPREHENSIVE POWER	EXPECTED POWER	POWER GAP
19	↘	SRI LANKA	7.8	10.6	-2.9
20	↘	NEPAL	5.0	8.2	-3.2
21	↘	MONGOLIA	6.0	9.2	-3.2
22	↘	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	4.6	7.9	-3.3
23	–	TAIWAN	15.7	19.5	-3.7
24	–	PAKISTAN	14.5	18.3	-3.8
25	–	INDIA	40.0	44.0	-4.0
26	↗	RUSSIA	32.1	38.9	-6.8
27	↘	NORTH KOREA	12.8	21.0	-8.2

Source: Indian Express

- It is a secondary analysis **derived from the Asia Power Index.**

- **Released by:** Australia-based Lowy Institute.

- It **reveals the difference between a country's expected influence, based on its resources, and its actual influence in the region.**

- This insight also helps analysts and policymakers assess how effectively a country converts that strength into regional influence.

- **What does positive power gap shows:** A positive Power Gap score means a country exerts more influence than its resources would predict. It suggests effective conversion of resources into influence through diplomacy, alliances and economic statecraft.

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- **What does negative power gap shows:** A negative Power Gap score indicates underperformance. It highlights a disconnect, where a country possesses significant capabilities but is not leveraging them fully in geopolitics.

- **How the Power Gap Index is calculated: It** consists of eight measures of power, 30 thematic sub-measures and 131 indicators.

  - The Index scores 27 countries' comprehensive power using a weighted average across eight thematic measures.

  - The **eight measures of power**, consists of **four resource measures**, which look at what countries have, and **four influence measures**, which look at what countries do with what they have.

  - These are combined into a weighted score out of 100.

  - It is then derived by comparing this overall power score with an expected score based solely on a country's resource base.

- **Findings of the Index**

  - The Index shows that **India is not fully utilizing its strategic potential**.

  - India has a **Power Gap score of –4.0**, the lowest in Asia (excluding Russia and North Korea), indicating a gap between its capabilities and actual influence.

  - **Japan** has a **Power Gap score of 11.3**, which reflects its position as a **"smart power."** Japan effectively uses limited resources to achieve strong **diplomatic, economic, and cultural influence** in the region.

  - North Korea has a **Power Gap score of –8.2**. It derives most of its power from its **military strength and nuclear weapons**. However, its **diplomatic and economic isolation** limits its regional influence.

  - Many **developing countries** show **influence shortfalls**. This reflects **unrealized potential** and **internal constraints** that prevent them from projecting power internationally.

Pradhan Mantri Dakshata Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi Yojana (PM-DAKSH)

News: The Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment provided updated information on PM-DAKSH implementation, outcomes, and its merger with PMKVY.

About Pradhan Mantri Dakshata Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi Yojana (PM-DAKSH)

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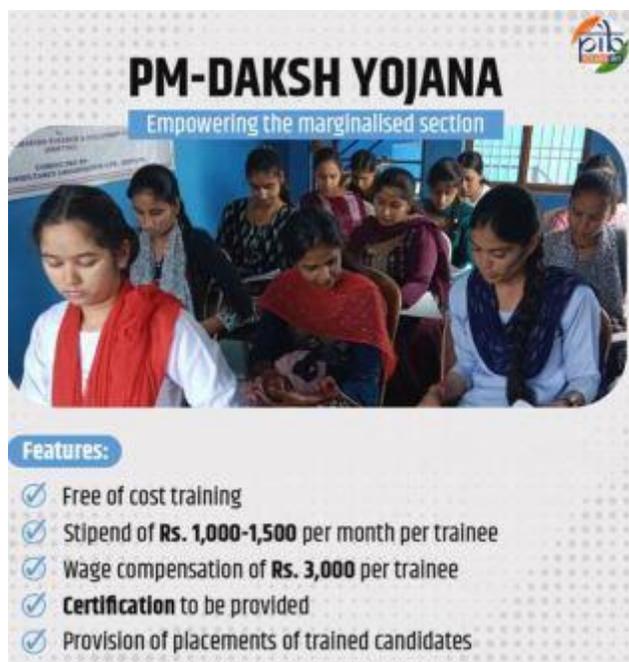**ForumIAS**

Figure 8. Source – PIB

- PM-DAKSH is a **National Action Plan** for **skilling marginalized persons, including SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs,** and **sanitation workers** such as waste pickers.

- **Objective:** The objective of PM-DAKSH is to **enhance skill levels of target groups** and support them in wage or self-employment for socio-economic development.

- It follows a multi-pronged strategy to **improve skills for wage and self-employment** by supporting **artisans, women, and youth for socio-economic development.**

- **Type of scheme:** It is a **Central Sector** scheme.

- **Launched by:** The scheme was launched by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2020–21.**

- **The scheme is implemented through:**

  - National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation **(NSFDC)** for **SCs.**

  - National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation **(NBCFDC)** for **OBC, EWS and DNTs.**

  - National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation **(NSKFDC)** for **Safai Karamcharis.**

- **Key features of PM-DAKSH**

  - The scheme provides **skill training to Indian citizens** aged **18 to 45 years.**

  - There are **four types of skill development training programmes** under PM-DAKSH Yojanaviz –

    - Up-skilling/Re-skilling

    - Short Term Training Programmes

    - Long Term Training Programmes

    - Entrepreneurship Development Programme.

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- **Present status:** From **2024–25 onwards**, PM-DAKSH has been **merged** with the **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)** of the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.**

Rare Earth Corridors

News: The Union Budget 2026–27 announced Dedicated Rare Earth Corridors to complement the REPM scheme and strengthen domestic rare earth capabilities.

About Rare Earth Corridors

Figure 9. Source – IE

- Rare Earth Corridors are **integrated, state-anchored industrial value chains** linking **mining, processing, research, and manufacturing of rare earths.**

- **Target States:** The Dedicated Rare Earth Corridors **will be established in** the mineral-rich states **of –**

  ○ **Odisha**

  ○ **Kerala**

  ○ **Andhra Pradesh**

  ○ **Tamil Nadu**

- **Focus on:** The corridors focus on **mining, processing, research, and manufacturing,** using the **mineral-rich base of coastal states** with beach sand minerals.

- **Aim:** The initiative **aims** to build a domestic rare earth value chain, support clean energy transition, and operationalise the **National Critical Minerals Mission at the state level.**

- **Principal Source: Monazite-bearing beach sands** are the principal source of rare earths in India and are present in the identified coastal states.

- **Key features**

  ○ **Integrated corridor approach:** Mining, separation, processing, research, and manufacturing facilities are co-located to reduce logistics and technology gaps.

  ○ **State-led execution:** The initiative promotes state-level value addition and industrial clustering beyond national-level policy focus.

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- **Linkage with incentives:** The corridors align with the Sintered **Rare Earth Permanent Magnet (REPM) scheme** and sales-linked incentives for integrated manufacturing units.

- These corridors **directly complement** the existing presence of **IREL (India) Limited** in Odisha and Kerala.

- **Significance**

  - The Rare Earth Corridors promote **self-reliance** by reducing import dependence on China, enhance **strategic resource security**, and strengthen **national security and defence preparedness**.

  - They support the **clean energy transition** and **Net Zero 2070** goals, while reinforcing **policy and institutional reforms** under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDR Act, amended in 2023)** and the **National Critical Minerals Mission.**

About IREL (India) Limited

- IREL (India) Limited, formerly **Indian Rare Earths Limited**, has **operated under the Department of Atomic Energy since 1963.**

- With a processing capacity of 10 lakh tonnes, it **produces strategic ilmenite, rutile, zircon, sillimanite, and garnet.**

- It runs **extraction in Odisha and a refining unit at Aluva, Kerala.**

Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

News: India reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive social development at the **64th Session of the Commission for Social Development**, held with participation of over 100 UN member states.

About Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

Source – ECOSOC

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- The Commission for Social Development is a **functional commission** of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC).**

- It **advises the United Nations and member states** on social development policies from a global perspective.

- It is **one of the six principal organs of the UN**, which was **established by the UN Charter (1945).**

- **Establishment**: The Commission was established in **1946** by an **ECOSOC resolution.**

- It was **originally called the Social Commission** and was renamed the Commission for Social Development in **1966**.

- **Functions**: The Commission provides policy advice on social development issues.

  - Since the **1995 Copenhagen World Summit**, it has been responsible for **following up and implementing the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.**

- **Members**: The Commission has **46 members**.

  - Members are **elected by ECOSOC** for **four-year terms** based on equitable geographical distribution.

- **Headquarter** : The Commission meets every year at the **United Nations Headquarters in New York**, usually in February.

- **India's Leadership**

  - India chaired the **62nd Session (2024)** for the **first time since 1975,** led by Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj.

Bharat-VISTAAR

News: The Union budget proposes 'Bharat-VISTAAR'(Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources) and the ICAR package on agricultural practices with AI systems.

About Bharat-VISTAAR

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Source: PIB

- **Bharat-VISTAAR sta**nds for **Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources.**

- It is a **multilingual, AI-powered digital platform** designed specifically to support Indian farmers.

- **Core Objective:** To **improve farm productivity**, enhance decision-making, and reduce risks through intelligent advisory services.

- The platform strengthens India's **Digital Agriculture Mission** and supports the objectives of the national AI Mission.

- **Integration of Existing Systems:** Bharat-VISTAAR **will integrate AgriStack portals, ICAR's agricultural practice packages, and advanced AI systems** to provide unified agricultural information.

- **Features:**

  ○ **Multilingual Access:** Bharat-VISTAAR **will be available in multiple Indian languages** to ensure easy access for farmers across different regions.

  ○ **Personalized Advisory Support:** The platform will offer **customized recommendations to farmers** based on crop type, soil condition, weather patterns, market trends, and regional farming practices.

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- ○ **Enhanced Decision-Making:** Through AI-based data analysis, **the system will help farmers make informed decisions regarding crop selection,** irrigation, fertilizer use, pest control, and harvesting time.

- ○ **Risk Reduction:** By using predictive analytics and real-time information, **Bharat-VISTAAR aims to reduce crop failures, minimize financial losses, and improve climate resilience.**

- ○ **Technology-Driven Farming:** The initiative **promotes data-driven and precision agriculture** by encouraging the use of modern digital technologies in farming.

- ○ **Support to Small and Marginal Farmers:** Bharat-VISTAAR **focuses on empowering small and marginal farmers** by providing them with access to advanced digital advisory tools.

Project Vault

News: The United States announced Project Vault to build a critical minerals stockpile to reduce dependence on China and manage supply disruptions.

About Project Vault

Figure 10. Source – The White House

- ● Project Vault is a **public-private partnership** created to **buy and store critical minerals and rare earth elements.**

- ● **Announced by:** The initiative was **announced by** the President of the United States, **Donald Trump.**

- ● **Objectives**: To establish a **Strategic Critical Minerals Reserve**, to ensure that American businesses and workers are not harmed by shortages of critical minerals.

- ● **Funding:** Project Vault will **combine $1.67 billion in private seed funding with $10 billion from the US Export-Import Bank.**

- ● **Target Minerals:** Focuses on essential materials for defense, tech, and green energy sectors, including **gallium, cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements**.

- ● **Key features**

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- ○ **Stockpiling mechanism:** Companies commit to future purchases at fixed prices and pay upfront fees, after which Project Vault buys and stores required minerals.

- ○ **Access and replacement rule:** Companies can use stored minerals if they replace them, and can fully access stockpiles during major supply disruptions.

- ○ **Price stability measure:** Firms must repurchase the same quantity later at the same price to help reduce market price volatility.

- ● **Strategic Significance:** Part of the **"America First" strategy** to **reduce heavy dependence on China**, which currently dominates 80–90% of global mineral refining.

Turtle Trail

News: The Union Budget 2026 proposes the development of turtle trails along key nesting sites in the coastal areas of Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala.

About Turtle Trail

Figure 11. Source – PIB

● Creation of Turtle trail **aims to protect endangered sea turtles and generate new livelihood opportunities** for **local communities** dependent on coastal ecosystems.

● **Developed at:** It will be developed along **key nesting sites in the coastal areas of Odisha (Gahirmatha and Rushikulya), Karnataka and Kerala.** These regions are critical habitats for the **Olive Ridley turtles**, known for **arribadas**.

● **Note:** Mass nesting or **arribada of endangered Olive Ridley** sea turtles is recorded only along India, Costa Rica and some handful of beaches in the world.

- ● **Key features**:

  - ○ **Controlled and supervised anthropogenic activities in** turtle nesting sites.

  - ○ **Local communities, fishermen, and volunteers are actively involved** in monitoring and protecting turtle nesting sites.

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- Awareness and education programs are conducted to inform the public about the importance of turtle conservation.

- Artificial lighting along the coast is regulated to prevent hatchlings from becoming disoriented.

- **Issues related to development of Turtle trail: Unregulated tourism, artificial lighting, noise, mining and construction near beaches can disturb** nesting turtles and hatchlings.
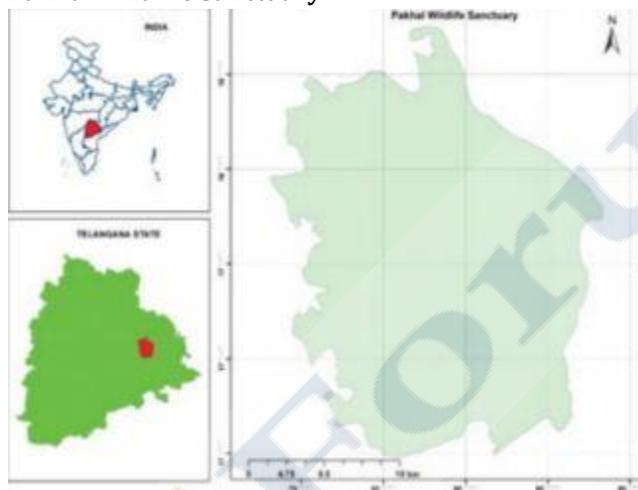
Read more: Olive Redly Turtle

Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary

News: Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have identified a new species of flowering plant in Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary.

About Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary

Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary map
Figure 12. Source – BSI

- **Location:** It is situated in **Warangal district of Telangana.**

- It was declared a sanctuary in **1952.**

- **Area:** Approximately 839 square kilometres

- It is **home to Pakhal Lake,** which was **constructed in 1213 AD** on the orders of King **Ganapati Deva of the Kakatiya dynasty.**

- **Vegetation:** The sanctuary is characterized by **mixed deciduous forests.**

- **Flora:** The vegetation mainly include**s bamboo and teak, along with a wide variety of plant species such as Terminalia, Pterocarpus, and Mahua.** It also supports numerous herbs, shrubs, and climbers.

- **Fauna: Leopard, wild boar, panther, hyena, sloth bear, chital, mountain gazelle, blackbuck, crocodile,** etc are found here.

  - Reptiles like the **python, cobra, russell's viper, common krait, monitor lizard, Indian chameleon,** and occasionally, **marsh crocodiles** are also found here.

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About Dicliptera pakhalica

- **Floral species name:** Dicliptera pakhalica

- **Family:** Acanthaceae

- The **genus Dicliptera is one of the most species-rich within the Acanthaceae family**, with more than **220 species distributed across tropical and subtropical regions worldwide.**

- **Features:** It has **spiny (echinate) seeds**, **an obovoid-shaped fruit capsule**, a **stem with downward-pointing (adpressed deflexed) hairs,** and the **absence of glandular hairs on its fruit and floral parts.**

  - It **flowers between November and January,** with fruiting extending from December to March.

Exercise KHANJAR XIII

News: The thirteenth edition of Exercise KHANJAR has begun at Misamari in Assam, involving Special Forces from India and Kyrgyzstan.

About Exercise KHANJAR XIII

Figure 13. Source – BSI

Source – AIR

- Exercise KHANJAR XIII is a **joint military exercise** conducted **between India and Kyrgyzstan** to enhance Special Forces cooperation.

- **First edition:** India and Kyrgyzstan have been conducting this exercise **annually since 2011** with **venues alternating between both countries.**

- **Held at:** The exercise is being held **at Misamari in the Sonitpur district of Assam**.

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- **Objective:** The objective is to enhance interoperability for joint operations in **urban warfare and counter-terrorism under a United Nations mandate.**

- **Participating forces: India's elite Parachute Regiment** and **Kyrgyzstan's Scorpion Brigade** are participating in the exercise.

- **Key Features**

  - The forces will practice sniping, room intervention, and building clearance operations.

  - Training will also include mountain craft and specialized counter-terrorism drills.

Key Facts about Tanzania

News: India and Tanzania held the fourth meeting of the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) in Zanzibar from February 2 to 3 to further strengthen bilateral ties.

Key Facts about Tanzania

Figure 14. Source: World Atlas

- **Location:** It is **located in East Africa.**

- **Bordering Nations:** It is bordered by seven countries: **the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Mali, Mozambique, and Rwanda.**

  - The **eastern border** of Tanzania meets **the Indian Ocean.**

- **Capital: Dar es Salaam**

- **Official Language:** Swahili and English

- **Geography:** The **East African Rift Valley** is a **major physical feature** that **runs through** Tanzania.

  - It is **divided** into the **Eastern Rift and the Western Rift.**

  - The **Eastern Rift** includes **Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.**

- **Major Lake:** Tanzania has shorelines along **three major African Great Lakes: Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika (western rift), and Lake Nyassa.**

- **Major River:** Ruvuma, Rufiji, Wami, and Pangani

- **Major Islands: Zanzibar**, Pemba, and Mafia located off the eastern coast in the Indian Ocean.

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- **Conservation reserves:** The country is home to famous wildlife areas such as **Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater.**

- **Zanzibar's Stone Town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site** and is a major tourist attraction.

NE-RACE Portal

News: The NE-RACE portal, launched to strengthen market linkages for farmers of the North Eastern Region (NER), has facilitated agri-trade worth ₹895.56 lakh as of January 2026.

About NE-RACE

Figure 15. Source: nerace.in

- **NE-RACE** is a **digital agri-marketing platform** that connects **farmers, FPOs, SHGs and cooperatives** of the North Eastern Region with **buyers across India and abroad.**

- It enables **direct buyer–seller linkages** and reduces intermediaries.

- **Key Features**

  ○ It supports **Farm-to-Business (F2B)** marketing of agri and horticultural products.

  ○ It provides **buyer–seller matchmaking**, logistics guidance and digital traceability.

  ○ It is equipped with a **multi-lingual helpdesk** and field-level support.

  ○ It supports **seven languages** to improve farmer onboarding and accessibility.

- **Products Covered**

  ○ **Spices, fruits and vegetables**, including region-specific products like **Kiwi, Black Rice and Ginger.**

  ○ It focus on **high-value horticultural produce** of the North East.

- **Implementing Agencies**

  ○ **Developed by:** North Eastern Council (NEC)

  ○ **Managed by:** North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFi)

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Anthropic AI Workplace Suite

News: Global technology stocks declined sharply after Anthropic launched its AI-powered workplace automation suite. It raised concerns that AI may replace, rather than support, traditional software and IT services.

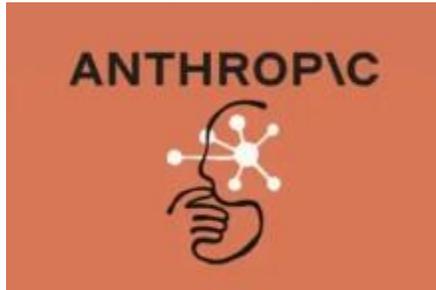**About Anthropic AI Workplace Suite**

Figure 16. Source: TOI

- It is a **set of autonomous, AI agent-based tools** for enterprise automation.

- **Developed by:** Anthropic

- The suite **operates through Claude Cowork agents** powered by the **Claude AI model.**

- **Features:**

  - It is designed to **autonomously handle complex, multi-step professional work.**

  - It can **directly perform tasks that previously required human workers** to use platforms like Salesforce or ServiceNow.

  - It reduces **dependence on human workers and conventional SaaS tools.**

  - It **bundles domain-specific skills, connectors to tools** and sub-agents for multi-step workflows.

  - **Multiple plug-ins: 11 new plugins** for productivity, product management, marketing, legal, finance, research, and data analysis to automate and streamline work.

BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC)

News: India has joined the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC) to provide integrated support services to manufacturing companies and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises across BRICS countries.

About BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC)

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Source: PIB

- It was initiated in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
  - **Note**: UNIDO is a specialized United Nations agency with a unique mandate to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development.
- It is a **one-stop networking hub** for manufacturing companies in BRICS Plus countries.
- **Objective:** It focuses on BRICS Plus countries to make **transition into 'Factories of the Future', expand internationally, and adopt sustainable practices.**
- **Vision:**
  - To **become the BRICS-driven technology marketplace** for small and medium-sized enterprises,
  - To **promote market access and business internationalization**
  - To **provide scalable solutions** which can be adopted throughout BRICS and other partner countries.
  - The **centre focuses on developing Industry 4.0 competencies.**
- **Members:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Ethiopia and Indonesia.
- **Partners:** Partners include smart manufacturing centres, digital excellence hubs, business support organizations, export agencies, chambers of commerce, universities, research institutions, business incubators and other specialized entities.

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- **Nodal Agency in India:** The National Productivity Council (NPC) has been designated as the India Centre for BRICS Industrial Competencies.

Nalsarovar Bird sanctuary

News: Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary has recorded more than five lakh birds from over 200 species in its latest census, showing a significant 21% increase from 4.12 lakh in 2024.
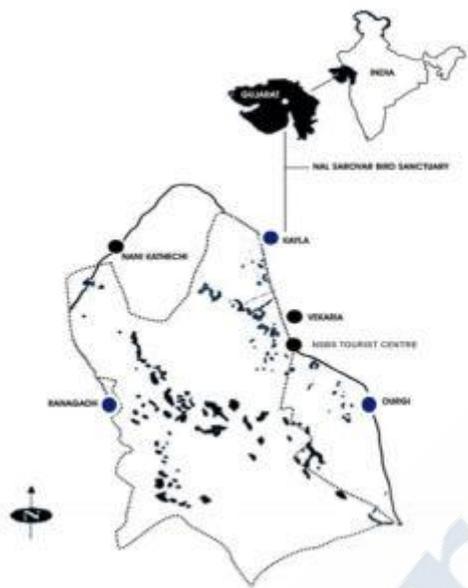
About Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary

Figure 17. Source – Research Gate

- **Location:** Located to the west of Ahmedabad near Sanand village, Gujarat.
- It is a natural lake with shallow waters and muddy lagoons, dotted by 360 islets.
- **River associated:** Nalsarovar Lake is situated across the **Sabarmati River.**
- It was **declared as a Ramsar site in 2012.**
- **Flora:** The sanctuary has **48 species of algae and 72 species of flowering plants**.
  - The locally famous 'pilu' trees which harbour a red berry type edible fruit are also found here.
  - The **common aquatic plants** found here are **Cyperus sp., Scirpus sp., Typha ungustata, Eleocharis palustris, Ruppia, Potamogeton, Vallisnaria, Naias, Chara** etc.
- **Fauna:** It is **home to more than 250 species of birds.**
  - **Important birds** including **greater and lesser flamingoes, pelicans, ducks & geese, rails,** coots, cranes, cormorants, herons, egrets, storks, ibises, spoonbills, teals, sarus cranes, moorhens and waders etc are found here.
  - **Other animals:** Other animals like **wild ass, Mongoose, jungle cat, Indian fox, jackal, wolf and hyena are also found here.**

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FORGE Initiative

News: India has extended support to the FORGE Initiative, launched at the inaugural Critical Minerals Ministerial (Washington DC, February 2026).

About FORGE Initiative

Figure 18. Source – DD News

- **FORGE (Forum on Resource, Geostrategic Engagement)** is a **multilateral framework on critical minerals**.

- It is the **successor to the US-led Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)**.

- It is launched to address emerging **geostrategic and supply chain risks** in critical minerals.

- **Objective: De-risk global critical mineral supply chains** by reducing **excessive concentration** and **overdependence on few suppliers**.

- **Key Features**

  ○ The FORGE Initiative focuses on **diversification, transparency and resilience** of critical mineral supply chains.

  ○ It promotes **cooperation at both policy and project levels** among participating countries.

  ○ The initiative emphasises **responsible mining and processing practices** to ensure sustainability.

  ○ It targets **critical minerals essential for clean energy transition and advanced technologies**.

- **Minerals Covered:** Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Rare Earth Element

- **Participation: 50+ countries**, including:

  ○ **India**

  ○ **United States**

  ○ **European Union**

- **Importance for India**

  ○ Reduces **import vulnerability** in strategic minerals.

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○ Supports **EVs, renewable energy and battery storage**.

○ Aligns with **Net Zero by 2070** goal.

○ Complements domestic initiatives:

　　○ **National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM)**

　　○ **Rare Earth Corridors** (Budget 2026–27)

Saltwater Crocodiles

News: A recent genetic study has confirmed that the now-extinct crocodiles of the Seychelles were saltwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*).

About Saltwater Crocodiles

STUDY FINDINGS
➤ Saltwater crocodiles in the Indian Sundarbans prefer creeks & rivers with width less that 170m
➤ Salinity preference | 14-26 parts per thousand
➤ Ambient temp preference during basking | 20°C-28°C
➤ Similar study to be carried out for **three more years**
➤ Study to span **over 3 months every year**
➤ Focus also on identifying nesting sites

Figure 19. Source – ToI

● The **saltwater crocodile** (*Crocodylus porosus*) is the **largest and heaviest living reptile** in the world and an **opportunistic apex predator**.

● It is also known as the **estuarine or Indo-Pacific crocodile.**

● It is uniquely adapted to **marine and brackish environments** due to specialized salt-excreting glands.

● **Habitat:** The species inhabits **mangroves, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas** across the **Indo-Pacific region**.

● It is noted for its high territoriality, solitary behaviour, and long-distance oceanic dispersal ability.

● **Distribution**

○ It has a wide **Indo-Pacific** distribution, occurring along the **eastern coast of India, Southeast Asia, the Sundaic region, northern Australia, and Micronesia**.

○ In **India**, it is primarily found in **Odisha, the Sundarbans of West Bengal**, and the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands.**

● **Characteristics**

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○ The saltwater crocodile is **highly territorial** and **largely solitary**, with dominant males controlling extensive stretches of rivers, estuaries, or coastal areas.

○ It possesses specialized **salt-excreting glands** that enable it to survive for long periods in seawater.

○ It is an **opportunistic hypercarnivorous apex predator** capable of long-distance oceanic dispersal.

○ It is the **largest and heaviest living reptile**, exhibiting exceptional adaptability to both marine and freshwater environments.

● **Threats**

○ **Habitat loss and degradation** due to coastal development, mangrove destruction, and alteration of estuarine ecosystems.

○ **Human–crocodile conflict**

○ **Historical overexploitation and extermination** linked to hunting and early human settlement

○ **Disturbance from increasing human activity** in nesting and basking sites, affecting breeding success

● **Conservation Status-**

○ **IUCN Red List: Least Concern**

○ **CITES: Appendix I** (with exceptions)

○ **Schedule I of India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.

Devnimori Relics

News: India organised the first-ever public exposition of the Devnimori Relics of Lord Buddha outside India at the Gangaramaya Temple, Colombo (Sri Lanka).

About Devnimori Relics

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Source: High Commission of India

- The **Devnimori Relics** originate from the **Devnimori archaeological site** near **Shamlaji** in the **Aravalli district of Gujarat**. The inscription language is **Brahmi script & Sanskrit.**

- The site was first scientifically explored in **1957** by archaeologist **Prof. S. N. Chowdhry**.

- Archaeological findings indicate the **spread and flourishing of Buddhism in western India** during the **early centuries of the Common Era**.

- The relics symbolise **Lord Buddha's teachings of peace, compassion, and harmony**

Major Archaeological Findings at Devnimori
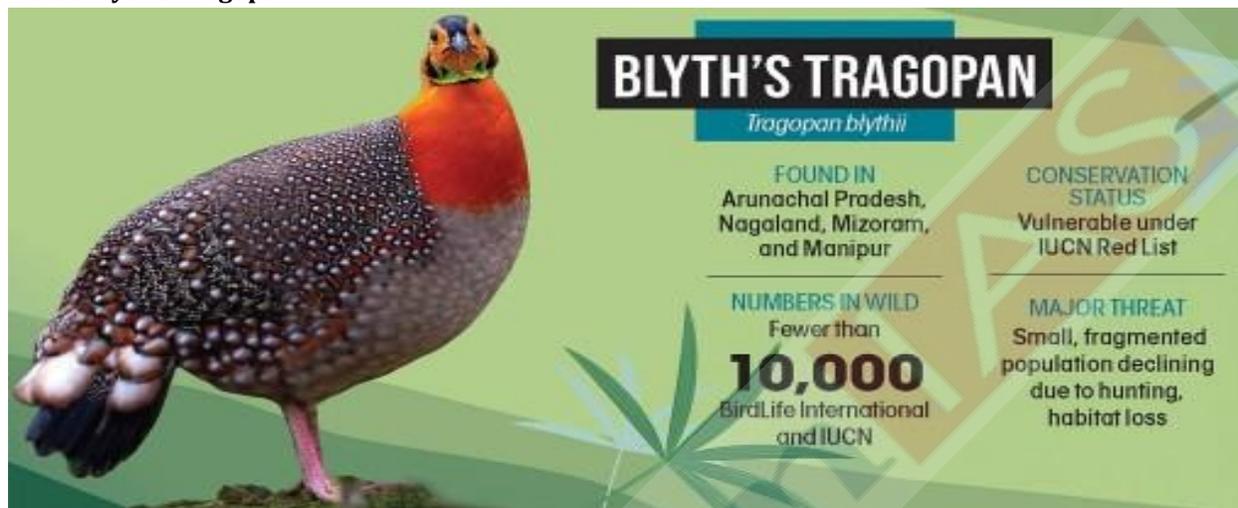
- **Relic Casket**

    - Discovered inside the **Devnimori Stupa** at a height of about **24 feet from the base**.

    - Made of **green schist stone**.

    - Bears inscriptions in **Brahmi script and Sanskrit** reading **"Dashabala Sharira Nilaya"**, meaning *abode of the Buddha's bodily relics*.

- **Copper Container**

    - A **copper box** with a flat base and slip-on lid fitted onto a rim ledge.

    - Contained **organic material with holy ashes**, **silk cloth fragments**, **beads**, and **black clay covering**.

- **Amphora-like Bottle**

    - A **gold-coated silver-copper miniature bottle**.

    - Features a cylindrical body, narrow neck, and **screw-type lid**, resembling ancient amphora vessels.

Preservation: The relics are preserved in a **desiccator sealed within an air-tight glass enclosure** to prevent moisture damage and deterioration.

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Blyth's tragopan

News: Blyth's tragopan is an indicator species for some of Asia's most biodiverse and least-explored mountain ecosystems.

About Blyth's Tragopan

Source: DTE

- Blyth's tragopan is a **rare and colourful mountain ground-dwelling pheasant.**

- **Family:** Phasianidae

- **Scientific name:** Tragopan blythii

- **Habitat:** It lives in **montane broadleaf forests, rhododendron forests, bamboo thickets, and dense undergrowth**.

  - It **prefers moist, cool mountain environments with thick vegetation.**

  - **Migration:** During **winter, it descends to elevations of about 1,400 metres**. In **summer**, it **moves up to higher altitudes of around 3,300 metres.**

- **Distribution:** It is found in **Bhutan, northeast India, northern Myanmar, southeastern Tibet, and parts of China.**

  - In India, it is mainly found **in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland (State bird), Mizoram, and Manipur.**

  - It is the **state bird of Nagaland**.

- **Physical Features:**

  - The male Blyth's tragopan has a **deep brown upper body marked with red, maroon, and white spots.**

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- Its **breast is bright crimson with a distinct black half-collar** beneath the chin.

- The **face is orange-yellow** and **bordered by a black crown and collar.**

- The **head, neck, and shoulders show vivid scarlet feathers.**

- **During the breeding season, the male develops pale blue horns and an inflated, brightly coloured throat lappet.**

- The **male measures** about **65 to 70 centimetres** and **female measures** about **59 centimetres in length.**

- The **female has pale grey-brown feathers with faint spots** that help her blend into the forest floor.

- **Behaviour:** It is **usually found alone or in small groups of four to five birds**. The bird is **most active during early morning and late evening hours.**

- **Diet:** It feeds mainly on **seeds, berries, shoots, leaves, and insects** found on the forest floor.

- **Threats: Habitat destruction** caused by anthropogenic activities

- **Conservation Status:** IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: **Vulnerable**

  - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: **Schedule I**

  - CITES: **Appendix I**

Saltwater Crocodile

News: A recent genetic study has confirmed that the now-extinct crocodiles of the Seychelles were saltwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*).

About Saltwater Crocodiles

STUDY FINDINGS
- Saltwater crocodiles in the Indian Sundarbans prefer creeks & rivers with width less that 170m
- Salinity preference | 14-26 parts per thousand
- Ambient temp preference during basking | 20°C-28°C
- Similar study to be carried out for **three more years**
- Study to span **over 3 months every year**
- Focus also on identifying nesting sites

Figure 20. Source – ToI

- The **saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*)** is the **largest and heaviest living reptile** in the world and an **opportunistic apex predator**.

- It is also known as the **estuarine or Indo-Pacific crocodile.**

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- It is uniquely adapted to **marine and brackish environments** due to specialized salt-excreting glands.

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- It is noted for its high territoriality, solitary behaviour, and long-distance oceanic dispersal ability.

- **Distribution**

  ○ It has a wide **Indo-Pacific** distribution, occurring along the **eastern coast of India, Southeast Asia, the Sundaic region, northern Australia, and Micronesia**.

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- **Characteristics**

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- **Threats**

  ○ **Habitat loss and degradation** due to coastal development, mangrove destruction, and alteration of estuarine ecosystems.

  ○ **Human–crocodile conflict**

  ○ **Historical overexploitation and extermination** linked to hunting and early human settlement

  ○ **Disturbance from increasing human activity** in nesting and basking sites, affecting breeding success

- **Conservation Status-**

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  ○ **CITES: Appendix I** (with exceptions)

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○ **Schedule I of India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.

'Vayu Shakti 2026' Exercise

News: The Indian Air Force will conduct a major firepower exercise called Exercise Vayu Shakti at the Pokaran Field Firing Range in Rajasthan.

About 'Vayu Shakti 2026' Exercise

Source: TOI

● It is a **major air combat exercise** by **Indian Air Force, modelled after Operation Sindoor.**

● **Location:** The exercise will take place at the Pokaran Field Firing Range, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

● **Scheduled date:** 27 February 2026

● It is expected to be the **Indian Air Force's largest air combat drill of the year.**

● **Objective:** To test **operational strategy and weapon systems** to **strike simulated enemy targets.**

● **Participating Commands:** Airbases and assets of the IAF's Western and South Western Air Commands will participate in the exercise.

● **Features**:

○ The exercise will be **conducted in a simulated wartime scenario and monitored through the IAF's Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS)** for real-time coordination.

○ Almost all frontline fighter aircraft and air defence systems that were part of Operation Sindoor will engage.

○ It includes **Rafale, Su-30 MKI, Tejas, MiG-29, Jaguar, Mirage-2000, and Hawk. (**Note: The MiG-21 (retired) will not feature in the exercise for the first time.)

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- Long-, medium-, and short-range radar inputs will be integrated to create a comprehensive air picture for offensive and defensive missions.

- Fixed-wing transport aircraft such as C-130J and C-295 will participate in operational tasks.

- Helicopter units, including **Prachand, Chinook, Mi-17, and Advanced Light Helicopter platforms,** will support mission operations.

- Drones and loitering munitions will be deployed for surveillance and strike roles.

- Multi-layered air defence systems, including Akash missiles, L-70 guns, and anti-drone platforms, will remain at operational readiness.

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