

Factly Weekly

Compilation

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**For UPSC CSE Prelims
Exam**

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Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)

News: The U.K. has recognised India's CCTS for carbon pricing relief under its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

About Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)



Figure 1. Source – PIB

- **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)** is a mechanism designed to reduce GHG emissions through carbon pricing.
 - It laid the foundation for the Indian Carbon Market (ICM) by establishing its institutional framework.
- **Legal Basis:** It was notified by the Ministry of Power in 2023 under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- **Predecessor:** CCTS supersedes the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme, which focused on energy efficiency through Energy Saving Certificates (ESCs).
- **Objective:** It aims to decarbonize industrial sectors by shifting the focus from energy efficiency to GHG emissions intensity reduction.
- **Institutional Structure**
 - **Administrator:** The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) sets targets and issues Carbon Credit Certificates (CCCs).
 - **Regulator:** The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) regulates CCC trading.
- **Operational Mechanism:**
 - **Coverage:** The CCTS compliance mechanism initially covers nine energy-intensive sectors – aluminium, cement, chlor-alkali, pulp and paper, iron and steel, fertilizer, petroleum refining, petrochemicals, and textiles.
 - **Setting Targets:** Obligated entities in these sectors are given sector-specific GHG emission intensity targets.
 - **Measuring Performance:** Their performance is assessed against the prescribed emission intensity targets.
 - **Earning Credits:** An entity that performs better than its target earns Carbon Credit Certificates (CCCs), with 1 CCC representing 1 tonne of CO₂ equivalent reduced.
 - **Buying Credits:** An entity that fails to meet its target must purchase CCCs to meet its compliance requirement.
 - **Trading Credits:** Earned CCCs can be traded on power exchanges, allowing entities that need credits to purchase them.
 - **Voluntary Participation:** Entities outside the compliance mechanism can voluntarily reduce their emissions and earn carbon credits through the offset mechanism.
- **CCTS Emission Accounting:**
 - **Intensity-Based Targets:** CCTS sets targets in tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per unit of product output.
 - **Scope of Emissions:** It covers direct emissions from fuel combustion and industrial processes (Scope 1) and indirect emissions from electricity and heat consumption (Scope 2).

- **Additional Emissions:** Some **Scope 3 emissions**, including **emissions from the import and export of intermediary products**, are also considered.

India joins Call to Action for 6G Leadership and Security and Bharat 6G Mission

News: India has joined a US-led initiative with 25 other countries to shape the development and security of next-generation 6G networks.

About India joins Call to Action for 6G Leadership and Security



Source – Money Control

- **'Call to Action for 6G Leadership and Security'** is an **international initiative for 6G telecommunications networks**.
- **Launched by:** The initiative was launched by the **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)** under the **US Commerce Department**.
- **Partner nations:** The initiative has **26 partner countries**, including **India and the United States**.
- **Objective:** It seeks to **ensure that 6G networks reflect shared security interests, strengthen competitiveness and drive innovation**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Network security:** It aims to ensure that next-generation networks reflect **shared security interests**.
 - **Interoperability:** It promotes **interoperability** so that 6G networks can function effectively across different countries and systems.
 - **Resilience:** It aims to make **6G infrastructure resilient**, so that next-generation networks can remain reliable and robust.
 - **Trusted AI:** It promotes the use of **trusted artificial intelligence** in developing and operating 6G infrastructure.
 - **Competitiveness and innovation:** It seeks to **strengthen competitiveness and drive innovation** in 6G development.

About Bharat 6G Mission

- **Bharat 6G Mission** is **India's initiative to develop next-generation wireless communication capabilities**.
- **Objective:** It aims to make India a **leading global supplier of affordable 6G intellectual property, products and solutions**.

- **Phases:** The mission will be **implemented in two phases**, covering 2023–2025 and 2025–2030.
 - **Phase 1:** It supports **new ideas, use cases, intellectual property (IP) and testbeds** through research and government support.
 - **Phase 2:** It focuses on **developing globally viable concepts and use cases and commercializing IPs, prototypes and testbeds**.
- **Apex Council:** The Government has **appointed an Apex Council to oversee the Bharat 6G Mission**.
 - **Standardization:** It focuses on **6G standardization and identification of spectrum for 6G use**.
 - **Ecosystem:** It works to **create an ecosystem for 6G devices and systems**.
 - **Finance:** It addresses the **financing of research and development**.
 - **Technology:** It focuses on technologies such as **Terahertz communication, radio interfaces, tactile internet, AI for connected intelligence**, new encoding methods, waveforms and chipsets.

Nicotine Pouches and Their Regulation

News: A new ICMR-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research study found that nicotine pouches are reaching Indian cities through online platforms, hookah shops and gig delivery services.

About Nicotine Pouches and Their Regulation



Source: Reuters

- **About Nicotine Pouch:** It is a **small, tobacco-free, tea-bag-like sack** containing **nicotine, flavourings and plant-based fibres**.
 - **Note:** Nicotine is a **highly addictive chemical compound** found **naturally in the tobacco plant and used in products** like cigarettes, vapes, and nicotine pouches.
- Users place the **pouch between the lip and gum for up to an hour, allowing nicotine to be absorbed** directly into the bloodstream without smoke, vapour or spitting.
- **Regulation of Nicotine Pouches:**
 - **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA):** It governs the **marketing, advertising and sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products**.

- Since **nicotine pouches** are not among the products listed in the Act, they fall **outside** it.
 - **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:** Nicotine is **not specifically listed** as a **drug** under the Act. However, **nicotine patches and gums** are approved as **drugs** for **treating nicotine addiction**.
 - **Schedule K of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945** exempts certain **nicotine gums and lozenges** containing **less than 2 mg of nicotine** from licensing and prescription requirements.
 - **The Prevention of Food Adulteration Act and the Food Safety and Standards Act:** It defines food as **any processed, partially processed or unprocessed substance intended for human consumption**.
 - Court rulings on supari and chewing tobacco establish **that the definition has a very wide amplitude**, encompassing items that are **chewed rather than swallowed**.
 - It is arguable, then, that nicotine pouches could fall within the broad definition of food.
- **Import Regulations:** The import of nicotine pouches into India is governed by the **Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992** and the **Customs Act, 1962**.
 - The **Foreign Trade Act** empowers the Central Government to prohibit, restrict or regulate imports.
 - Under **Section 11 of the Customs Act, 1962** the government can prohibit or restrict goods through notification on grounds including the protection of human, animal or plant life.
 - Following the **World Customs Organization's update of the Harmonized System**, specific categories were introduced for oral nicotine products that do not involve combustion:
 - **2404 91 30** covers **tobacco-free, single-use nicotine pouches** such as **Zyn or Lyft**.
 - **2404 91 90** covers other **oral nicotine products not intended for therapeutic use**.
 - **Medicament codes** apply only to products specifically intended as **nicotine-cessation aids**.
 - Under the **DGFT schedule and CBIC rules**, products under **2404 91 30** are classified as **"restricted"**.
 - This means nicotine pouches are **not completely banned**, unlike e-cigarettes, but they **cannot be imported freely by merely paying customs duty**. They require a **specific licence or permission**.
 - In deciding whether to permit such imports, the **DGFT may consult the Health Ministry and other concerned ministries**.
- **Regulation for Duty-free shops:**
 - Nicotine pouches are **currently available at some duty-free shops** at Indian airports, which operate under **Section 58 of the Customs Act**.
 - In ***Flemingo Duty Free Shop Pvt. Ltd. v. Shri Kaushik Bhattacharya (2024)***, the Calcutta High Court held that **duty-free shops** are treated as being **outside India for certain purposes** under the Customs Act and therefore do not **"import"** goods into India.
 - However, **Indian laws and regulations still apply** to duty-free shops.
 - As nicotine pouches are classified as **restricted goods**, their sale requires the necessary **import licence or permission**.

Kashmir Flycatcher (*Ficedula subrubra*)

News: An ongoing research project is studying the Kashmir flycatcher in the North-Western Himalayas, including its migration and ecology.

About Kashmir Flycatcher



Source – Mongabay

- **Kashmir Flycatcher** is a **small migratory bird** of the **flycatcher family Muscipidae**.
- **Scientific Name:** *Ficedula subrubra*
- **Habitat:** It prefers mature **temperate broad-leaved forests** with **dense canopy and understorey**.
 - It is found at **1,800–2,700 m** above sea level.
- **Distribution:** It **returns to Kashmir to breed** and **spends the non-breeding season in the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka**.
 - It is **endemic to the Indian subcontinent**.
- **Characteristics:**
 - **Size:** It is about **13 cm** long and **barely larger than a sparrow**.
 - **Sexual Dimorphism:** Males have an **orange-red throat and breast**,
 - while **females and young birds** are **browner with lighter underparts**.
 - **Diet:** It feeds **mainly on flying and foliage-dwelling insects** during breeding.
 - **Behaviour:** Males **defend territories by singing and displaying**.
 - **Both parents feed nestlings**.
- **Threats:**
 - Forest loss and degradation,
 - Timber extraction,
 - Fuelwood collection
 - Infrastructure development
 - Tourism
 - Human disturbance
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN Red List: Vulnerable**

Yakov Novichenko bridge and Tumen River

News: North Korea and Russia opened the Yakov Novichenko Bridge, their first proper road link, over the Tumen River.

About Yakov Novichenko Bridge



Figure 2. Source – CSIS

- **Location:** The Yakov Novichenko Bridge is built over the Tumen River between Russia and North Korea.
- It was built near the existing Friendship Bridge, a rail bridge commissioned in 1959.
- **Naming:** The bridge is named after Yakov Novichenko, a Red Army soldier whom Pyongyang credits with protecting Kim Il Sung in 1946.
- **Size and Design:** It is a 1-km-long, two-lane road bridge designed to allow up to 300 vehicles to cross every day.
- **Connectivity:** It provides the first proper road link between Russia and North Korea.
 - It will also connect with Russia's federal road network and the transport corridor between Vladivostok and St Petersburg.

About Tumen River



Source – ScienceDirect

- The Tumen River originates from Mount Paektu, along the China-North Korea border.

- It forms part of the **boundary between China and North Korea in the upper reaches** and between **North Korea and Russia in the lower reaches**.
- **Other names:** It is also known as the **Tuman River or Duman River**.
 - Its **Russian name, Tumannaya, means “foggy”**.
- **Tributaries:** The **Gaya River and Hunchun River** are tributaries of the Tumen River.
- **Merges into:** It enters the **Sea of Japan (East Sea)**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Size:** It is **521 km long** and is the **third-longest river in Korea**.
 - **Navigability:** The river is **navigable for only 85 km**, limiting its navigational use.
 - **River Economic Development Area:** In **1995, China, Mongolia, Russia, North Korea and South Korea** signed **three agreements** to create the **Tumen River Economic Development Area**.

Bornean Orangutan

News: Wildfires in Kalimantan affected 60.2% of Bornean orangutan habitat, putting its food sources, nesting trees and habitat connectivity at risk.

About Bornean Orangutan



Source – WWF

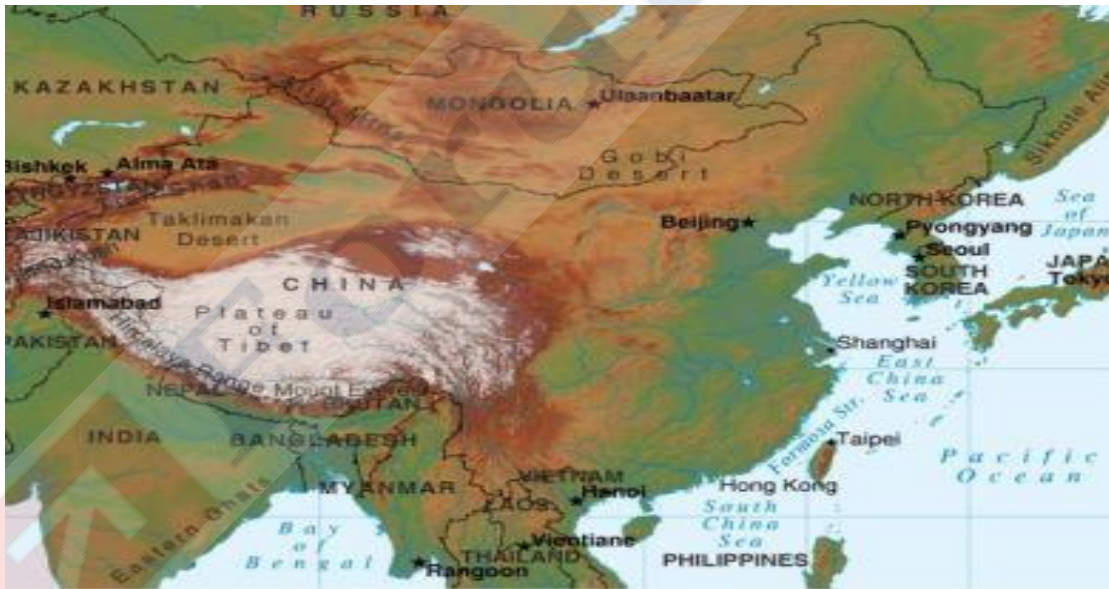
- The **Bornean orangutan** is a **great ape** that **naturally occurs in Borneo**.
- **Species Types:** There are **three recognized orangutan species** – **Bornean, Sumatran and [Tapanuli orangutans](#)**.
- **Habitat and Distribution:** The Bornean orangutan lives exclusively in the **tropical lowland and montane rainforests** on the **island of Borneo in Southeast Asia**.
- **Characteristics:**
 - **Physical Features:** It has **darker skin and hair, very long arms, shorter legs and long, hook-like hands and feet**.
 - **Cheek Pads:** **Mature males** develop **large, fleshy cheek pads**, which become more noticeable with age.
 - **Arboreal Life:** It is **adapted to life in trees** and uses **semibrachiation** to move through them.

- **Each night**, it builds **nests from branches and leaves**, 40–60 feet above the **ground**.
- **Diet**: It mainly **eats fruit**, and a large part of its day is spent foraging and eating.
- **Social Behaviour**: It **generally does not live in large social groups** because its fruit-based diet requires it to search widely for food.
- **Territorial Behaviour**: Adult **males may avoid or show aggression towards other males** entering their territory.
- **Intelligence**: It shows remarkable **cognitive skills**, including **memorisation**, **object recognition**, **problem-solving** and **occasional tool use**.
- **Threats**:
 - Wildfires
 - Habitat destruction
 - Poaching and illegal trafficking
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN Status**: **Critically Endangered**

Tibetan Plateau

News: Rising temperatures caused glacier retreat on the Tibetan Plateau, linked to the August 26 glacial collapse on the Nepal-China border.

About Tibetan Plateau



Source – World Atlas

- **Tibetan Plateau** is a vast, **high-elevation plateau** in Asia.
- **Other Names**: It is called the “**Roof of the World**” and **Qinghai-Tibet Plateau**.
- **Location and extension**: It lies in **southwestern China**.
 - It lies between the **Kunlun Mountains in the north** and the **Himalayas in the south**,
 - It extends from the **Pamir Plateau** in the west to the eastern highlands near the **Loess Plateau**.

- **Formation:**
 - **Plate Collision:** Around 45 million years ago, the northward-moving **Indian Plate** collided with the **Eurasian Plate**, causing intense **compression of the Earth's crust**.
 - **Crustal Deformation and Uplift:** The collision led to folding, faulting and thickening of the crust, which caused the **land to rise to great heights**.
 - **Formation and Continued Uplift:** This process resulted in the **formation of the Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau**.
 - The **plateau is still slowly rising**, although its rate of expansion has reduced over time.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Climate:** High altitude causes **cold and dry conditions**, with very **cold winters and short cool summers**.
 - **Relief:** It has **high plains, rugged mountains, deep valleys** and grasslands.
 - **Terrain:** Northern areas have **cold deserts**; the **Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Canyon** is one of the **deepest canyons**.
 - **Rivers:** It is the **source of the Indus, Ganga, Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Yellow River and Mekong**.
 - **Lakes:** It has both **saltwater and freshwater lakes**.
 - **Saltwater lakes:** Qinghai Lake and Namtso
 - **Freshwater lakes:** Manasarovar, Yamdrok and Pangong Tso
 - **Glaciers:** It has **more than 46,000 glaciers**.
 - **Role in Influencing Climate:**
 - In summer, **strong heating creates a low-pressure area** that **draws moist ocean winds**.
 - This **supports the southwest monsoon** and **influences rainfall in India**.
 - **Vegetation:** The plateau mainly has **alpine shrublands, sedge meadows and alpine steppe**, with **vegetation becoming drier from southeast to northwest**.
 - **Flora:** Common vegetation **includes Kobresia and Carex sedges, alpine forbs, juniper, dwarf rhododendron, Caragana and dwarf willow**.
 - **Fauna:** It supports **Tibetan wild ass, Tibetan gazelle, blue sheep and white-lipped deer**, along with **predators such as the snow leopard, gray wolf and brown bear**.

Gangdise Mountains

- **Location:** The **Gangdise Mountains** are located in the southwestern part of **Tibet**, **parallel to the Himalayas**.
- **Extensions:** The range **runs in a northwest-southeast direction** and **extends eastward into the Nyenchen Tanglha Mountains**.
- **Other Name:** The mountains are also **known as Gangdise Shan** and the **Kailas Range**.
 - It is also called "**Transhimalaya**" because it **lies behind the Himalayas, separated by the Tsangpo valley**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Peaks:** Its **highest peak is Mt. Loinbo Kangri (7,095 m)**, while **Mt. Kailash (6,656 m)** is its **main peak**.
 - **Watershed:** It forms a **watershed between the inland water system and the Indian Ocean water system**.

- **Relief:** The southern side has steep slopes, while the northern side gradually becomes more level.
- **Geological Age:** The range has experienced volcanic activity for about 100 million years, making the Gangdise Shan geologically older than the Himalayan Range.
- **Volcanic Features:** Although there are no active volcanoes today, the range still has several hot springs and geysers.

Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana (TBSY) and Nanha Sa Dil

News: The Ministry of Coal, along with Coal India Limited (CIL) celebrated key milestones under its flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives namely Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana (TBSY) and Nanha Sa Dil.

About Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana (TBSY)

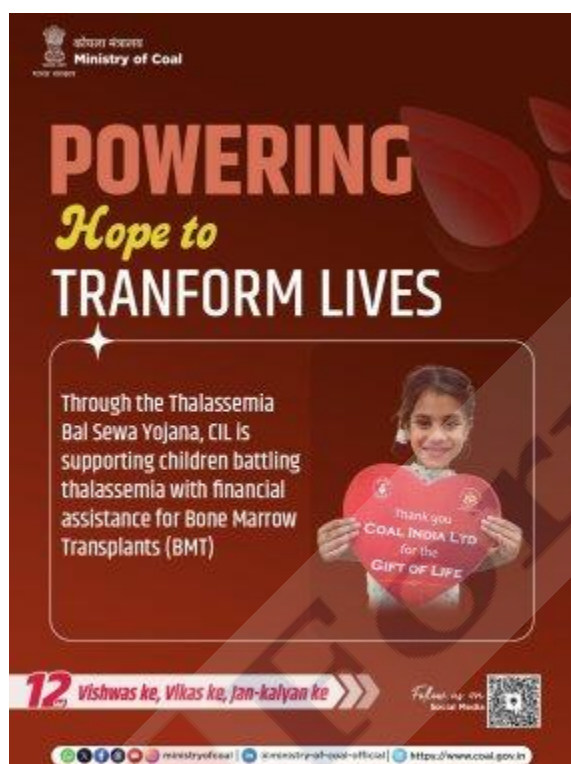


Figure 3. Source: Ministry of Coal

- **Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana (TBSY)** is a flagship corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative Coal India Limited (CIL) to address the treatment needs of children suffering from **Thalassemia and Aplastic Anaemia** — rare genetic blood disorders.

- CIL is the first PSU to take up such a CSR project in 2017, for curative treatment of **Thalassemia**.

- **Launch Year:** It was launched in 2017.

- **Funded by:** The scheme is a Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program.

- **Nodal ministry:** It is implemented in coordination with **Thalassemics India**, with monitoring guidance from the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.

- **Aim:** It aims to provide a **one-time cure opportunity to underprivileged Thalassemia patients** who have a matched sibling donor but do not have the financial resources to cover the cost of the procedure.

- **Financial assistance:** Under the scheme, up to **Rs. 10 lakh per patient** is extended directly to empanelled hospitals for **Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT)**, against a

total outlay of **Rs. 130 crore across four phases**.

- **Eligibility:** It supports families with an annual income below 8 lakh rupees.

About Nanha Sa Dil



Source: Ministry of Coal

- **Nanha Sa Dil** is a **CSR initiative** to provides completely **free** **corrective heart surgeries** for **children with congenital heart defects**.
- **Launched by:** It was **launched by CIL** in partnership **with the Sri Sathya Sai Health and Education Trust**.
 - It has scaled up through **CIL subsidiaries** like **NCL, SECL, CCL, and WCL**.
- The program was **designed to support children through the entire journey of care**, from awareness and screening to diagnosis, surgery and follow-up.
- **Coverage:** Over **2 lakh children** have been screened using **modern diagnostic tools**, and **more than 1,500 corrective surgeries** have been completed, **entirely free of cost** to patient families, including travel and hospitalisation expenses.

About Thalassemia

- **Thalassemia** is a **chronic and genetic blood disorder** due to which a patient's body cannot make enough hemoglobin leading to anemia.
 - This **disease is passed from parents to children** through genes and people suffering from it require blood transfusions to survive.

About Hematopoietic stem-cell transplantation (HSCT)

- **Hematopoietic stem-cell transplantation(HSCT):** It is the **transplantation of multipotent hematopoietic stem cells** usually derived from **bone marrow, peripheral blood, or umbilical cord blood**.
 - It may be **autologous (the patient's own stem cells are used)**, **allogeneic** (the stem cells come from a donor) **or syngeneic** (from an identical twin).
 - It is most often **performed for patients with certain cancers of the blood, thalassemia or bone marrow** such as multiple myeloma or leukemia.

Orangutans

News: Recently, five baby orangutans have been found in a forest in Odisha.

About Orangutans

- The orangutan is **Asia's only great ape**.
- The name **orangutan** means "**man of the forest**" in the Malay language.
- **Habitat:** They live exclusively in the **tropical rainforests of Southeast Asian islands**.
- **Distribution:** They are only **found exclusively on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra**.
- **Species:** There are **three** orangutan species:
 - Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*)
 - Sumatran orangutan (*Pongo abelii*)
 - [Tapanuli orangutan](#) (*Pongo tapanuliensis*)

Different Species of Orangutan

- **Bornean orangutan:** They are found **across Borneo**. They are the most numerous of the three species but are on decline.
- **Sumatran orangutan:** They are restricted to **northern Sumatra**. They are among the rarest great apes on the planet.
- **Tapanuli orangutan:** They are found on the **island of Sumatra in Indonesia**. They are **identified only in 2017**. Fewer than 800 individuals remain in forest patch.

Bornean orangutan	Sumatran orangutan	Tapanuli orangutan
Found across Borneo; the most numerous of the three species, still in steep decline	Restricted to northern Sumatra; among the rarest great apes on the planet	Identified only in 2017; fewer than 800 individuals remain in one forest patch

Source – IE

Characteristics:

- They are **larger than chimpanzees but are not as powerfully built as gorillas**.
 - Adult male orangutans are **typically twice the size of females**.
- **Distinguish feature:** Their skin is usually **dark tan or brownish** and is covered with coarse, sparse reddish-brown hair.
 - Older males develop **wide cheek pads**, which are a distinctive feature among primates.
 - Male orangutans can have very long hair that may look like a **cape when they move their arms**.
- **Behaviour:**
 - They are **arboreal** and are **largest tree-dwelling mammal species** on Earth.
 - They are **highly intelligent species** and are **known for tool use, problem-solving, and complex social learning**.
 - They **make nests in trees or vegetation** to sleep at night and rest during the day.
 - They live an **average of up to 40 years** in the wild while they can reach up to over 50 to 55 years in captivity.

- **Diet:** They feast on **wild fruits like lychees, mangosteens, and figs, and slurp water** from holes in trees.

Threat: **Habitat loss, poaching, and illegal trafficking** have been threat to the species.

Conservation status: All three species classified as **Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.**



Source – IE

e-FAST India and ZET Marketplace

News: e-FAST India launched the Platform for Aggregating Clean Transport (PACT) to accelerate zero-emission freight in India at the 5th e-FAST India Summit 2026 in New Delhi.

About e-FAST India



Figure 4. Source: e-fast india

- **Focus Areas:**
 - **Technology and Innovation:** It track the latest developments in freight electric technologies and private sector innovation.

- **e-FAST India** stands for **Electric Freight Accelerator for Sustainable Transport – India.**
- **Initiative by:** It is an initiative of NITI Aayog.
- It is an initiative **focused on advancing the electrification of medium- and heavy-duty freight** through collaboration among stakeholders.
 - It includes **OEMs, logistics service providers, financiers, shippers and charge point operators.**
- It is the **country's first platform to facilitate collaboration** between government stakeholders and private sector partners .

- **Market Acceleration:** Develop strategies to address barriers to adoption, incentivize manufacturing and avenues for experimentation and deployment.
- **Public Policy Support:** It support decision makers by identifying suitable incentive structures, public investment and resources to stimulate demand and industry innovation.

About ZET Marketplace

- ZET Marketplace is an interactive business-engagement platform connecting e-truck manufacturers, LSPs, CPOs, financiers, and technology companies.
- It acts as a unified ecosystem to support the purchasing, leasing, and commercial deployment of electric heavy-duty trucks.
- **Aim:** It aims to tackle high upfront capital costs and fragmented logistics infrastructure.
- The Marketplace enabled participants to showcase products, explore commercial opportunities and develop partnerships needed to move zero-emission freight projects from intent to implementation.

About Platform for Aggregating Clean Transport (PACT)

- Platform for Aggregating Clean Transport (PACT) is a flagship initiative under the e-FAST India (Electric Freight Accelerator for Sustainable Transport – India) platform.
- **Aim:** It aims to improve demand visibility, support charging infrastructure planning and strengthen the commercial case for electric medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (e-MHDVs).
- It brings together shippers, LSPs, vehicle manufacturers, financiers, charge point operators (CPOs) and other ecosystem partners at one platform.
- It is designed to aggregate freight demand from shippers, Logistics Service Providers (LSPs) and other ecosystem stakeholders and translate it into deployment opportunities across identified freight corridors.

Exercise Veer Guardian-2026

News: The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF) will conduct the bilateral air exercise Veer Guardian-2026.

About Exercise Veer Guardian-2026



Figure 5. Source: PIB

- Exercise Veer Guardian-2026 is a bilateral exercise conducted between India and Japan.
- **2026 Host:** It would be conducted from 9 September 2026 to 22 September 2026 at Air Force Station, Jodhpur.
- **Edition:** This is the second edition of this exercise.
 - **First edition:** The first edition of Exercise Veer Guardian was held in Japan in 2023.
- **Aim:** It aimed at strengthening operational coordination and sharing professional expertise.
- **Forces Involved:** Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF) will be participating in the exercise.

- **India's Participation:** The IAF will deploy a diverse fleet comprising the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, Su-30 MKI and Rafale fighter aircraft.
- **Japan Participation:** The JASDF will participate with its F-2A fighter aircraft.

- **Focus:** It focuses heavily on **strengthening interoperability, sharpening tactical combat skills, and fostering operational synergy** between the two air forces.
 - Participating air warriors **will engage in complex operational scenarios, including advanced air-combat manoeuvring.**
 - The comprehensive programme **also features mission-planning conferences, engineering exchanges, and focused discussions on aerospace safety.**
- **Significance:** These efforts will **help promote a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific region.**

Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan

News: India's advanced Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan was launched at Kolkata, marking progress in indigenous oceanographic research capabilities.

About Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan



Source – Indian Express

- **Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan** is an **all-weather, multidisciplinary ocean research vessel.**
- **Nodal Ministry:** It has been **developed under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).**
- **User Agency:** The **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)** will use the vessel.
- **Builder:** The vessel is designed, engineered and constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata.
- **Mission Link:** It has been constructed **under Vertical-4 (Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration) of the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM).**
- **Replacement:** It will gradually **replace the 43-year-old ORV Sagar Kanya**, procured from Germany in 1983.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Advanced Equipment:** It has dynamic positioning, multibeam bathymetry, seismic systems, sub-bottom profiling.
 - It also has **deployment facilities for Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs).**
 - **Research Capabilities:** It will support **mineral exploration, environmental baseline studies, atmospheric observations and Conductivity, Temperature and Depth (CTD) profiling.**

- **Extreme Operations:** It is designed to **operate in extreme oceanic environments**, including the Southern Ocean.
- **Service Life:** The vessel has a **projected service life of 30 years**.
- **Project Cost:** The vessel has been constructed at an approximate **cost of ₹840 crore** and is **scheduled for commissioning in 2028**.

Global Dryland Congress 2026

News: The Global Dryland Congress 2026 will be held in New Delhi from September 10 to 12, bringing together over 800 participants.

About Global Dryland Congress 2026



Figure 6. Source – PIB

- **Global Dryland Congress 2026** is a **three-day global event** promoting **sustainable and climate-resilient dryland agriculture**.
- **Theme:** “Transforming Dryland Agriculture with South-South Cooperation”
- **Held at:** It will be held at the **National Agricultural Science Complex in New Delhi**.
- **Organisers:** It is **jointly organised** by the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** and the **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)**.
- **Participants:** More than **800 scientists, policymakers, farmer representatives** and development partners from **Asia, Africa and the Americas** will participate.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Six Key Themes:** It will focus on **breeding, climate resilience, nutrition and markets, farming systems, seed systems, and gender and youth inclusion**.
 - **Knowledge Exchange:** It will provide a **platform to exchange knowledge and explore solutions** through **panel discussions, keynote presentations, parallel sessions and poster exhibitions**.
 - **South-South Cooperation:** It will commemorate the **United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation** and hold sessions on **South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)** in agricultural research.
 - **Expected Outcomes:** Its proceedings are expected to culminate in the **Delhi Declaration on Dryland (3D)**, along with new partnerships, MOUs and awards.
 - **50-Year Partnership:** It will mark **50 years of the ICAR-ICRISAT partnership**.

Red-naped Ibises

News: A new study in Udaipur found diverse bacteria, including multidrug-resistant strains, in red-naped ibis faeces.

About Red-naped Ibises



Figure 7. Source – eBird

- **Red-naped Ibis' scientific name** is *Pseudibis papillosa*.
- It is **commonly** known as the **Indian Black Ibis**.
- **Habitat:** It **prefers drier habitats**, including dry agricultural fields, fallow lands and scrub forests, **rather than depending strictly on wetlands**.
- **Distribution:** It is widely distributed **across the plains of the Indian subcontinent**.
 - It is **common in Rajasthan** along the **Aravalli mountains**.
- **Characteristics:**
 - **Appearance:** It has a **dark body** with a **bluish-green sheen** and a **white patch near the shoulder**.
- **Red nape:** It has **bright red warts on the crown and nape**, which give it its name.
- **Bill:** It has a **long, downcurved bill**.
- **Diet:** It is an **opportunistic omnivore** that feeds on carrion, insects, frogs, small vertebrates and grain.
- **Behaviour:** It is **usually found singly or in loose groups**.
- **Activity:** It is **largely diurnal** and **roosts communally on trees or islands at night**.
- **Threats:** It may **feed at garbage disposal sites**, which can expose it to **antibiotic-resistant bacteria**.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern
 - **Wild Life Protection Act:** Schedule-II

7th Global Fintech Fest 2026

News: The 7th edition of GFF is being held in Mumbai from 8 to 11 September 2026.

About 7th Global Fintech Fest 2026



Figure 8. Source: PIB

- The **7th Global Fintech Fest 2026** is the **world's largest fintech festival**, **uniting the brightest minds** to shape an **AI-powered future**.
- It serves as a **global platform** for **advancing policy dialogue**, **showcasing innovation**, enabling **cross-border partnerships and driving collaboration** at the intersection of finance, technology and public policy.
- **Place of event:** It is being held in **Mumbai from 8 to 11 September 2026**.
 - **1st Global Fintech Fest** took place virtually in **2020**.
- **Organised by:** It is organised by the **Payments Council of India (PCI)**, the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, and the **Fintech Convergence Council (FCC)**.

- It is supported by **MeitY; Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance; NEST Division, MEA; NITI Aayog; RBI; SEBI; IFSCA; and PFRDA.**
- **Theme:** “Potential to Impact: Agentic AI | Tokenisation | Quantum: Trusted, Connected, Global Systems for Inclusive Finance.”
- **Foundational Technologies:** It is built upon **three foundational technologies** that are shifting the landscape of global finance toward **autonomous, programmable, and secure ecosystems.**
 - **Agentic AI:** It enables financial systems to **sense, decide, and act in real time within strong governance frameworks.**
 - **Tokenisation:** It transforms assets into **programmable digital units**, enabling fractional ownership, instant settlement, and interoperable money.
 - **Quantum:** Quantum technologies **introduce a foundational shift** in computation and security.

Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape

News: Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape spans nearly 30 Million acres and protects a migration of around six million Antelopes.

About Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape



Figure 9. Source: Africa Geographic

- The **Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape** is located in **South Sudan.**
 - It is located at the **interface between the Sudd wetland system and the East Sudanian Savanna.**
- It is known for **supporting one of the world's largest terrestrial mammal migrations.**
- It comprises **Boma National Park, Badingilo National Park, and the surrounding floodplain and savanna landscapes** in South Sudan.
- **Vegetation:** It encompasses an **extensive mosaic of seasonally flooded grasslands, wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, and savannas** shaped by seasonal rainfall and flood dynamics.
- **Fauna:** These connected ecosystems **support one of the world's largest remaining land-mammal migrations.**
 - Around six million **White-eared Kob, Tiang, and Mongalla Gazelle** are found in this region.
 - It supports many important wildlife species, including **Nile Lechwe, African Savanna Elephant, African Wild Dog, Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, and Beisa Oryx.**
 - It is also an important habitat for **many bird species**, including **shoebills, storks, African Openbills, Abdim's Storks, and Woodland Kingfishers.**
- It is also home to diverse communities, including the **Murle, Dinka, Nuer, Anyuak, and Toposa.**
- It was inscribed on the **UNESCO World Heritage List** as South Sudan's first World Heritage Site in **July 2026.**

Article 371(K)

News: The Centre has proposed Article 371(K) to provide Ladakh with constitutional safeguards and a directly elected governing body.

About Article 371(K)



Source – Bharat Update News

- **Article 371(K)** is a **proposed constitutional provision** for Ladakh.
- It is **intended** to provide a **directly elected Union Territory-level legislative body** along with **special safeguards**.
- **Proposed by:** The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** proposed this framework during talks with Ladakh representatives, including the **Leh Apex Body** and **Kargil Democratic Alliance**.
- **Origin:**
 - **2019 Reorganisation:** Ladakh became a separate Union Territory without a legislative assembly after the **reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019**.
 - **Demand for Safeguards:** Concerns over land, employment, demography, cultural identity and limited Hill Council powers led to **demands for stronger constitutional protection**.
- **Key Features of the Proposal:**
 - **Directly Elected Body:** Ladakh would have a **directly elected governing body at the Union Territory level**.
 - **Legislative Powers:** The body would have **powers over land, culture and language, forests, environment and natural resources**.
 - **Separate Arrangement:** Article 371(K) would create a **separate constitutional arrangement for Ladakh, rather than simply extending the Sixth Schedule**.
 - **Unresolved Powers:** The **Executive, financial, planning, police and law-and-order powers** have **not yet been decided**.
 - There is **no detailed draft** specifying the powers of the proposed body, and **further talks are expected in October**.
- **Difference Between Article 371(K) and Sixth Schedule:** The Sixth Schedule creates **Autonomous District Councils within States (Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura)**.
 - In contrast, **Article 371(K) proposes a directly elected governing body for Ladakh, a Union Territory**, creating a distinct constitutional arrangement.

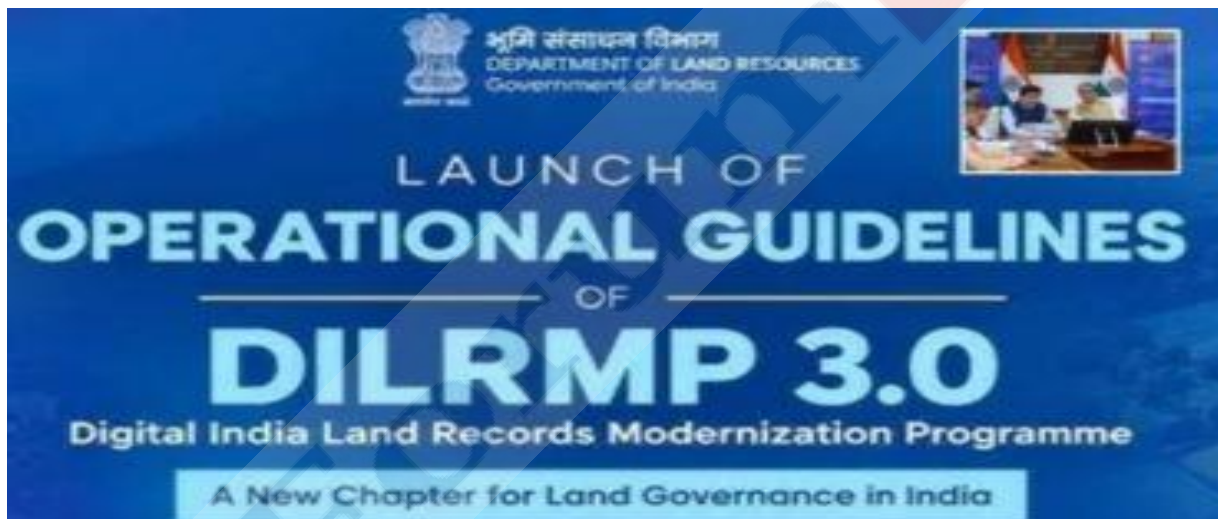
About Article 371

- **Special Provisions:** Articles 371 to 371-J provide special constitutional arrangements for 12 States.
- **Original provision:** Article 371 was part of the original Constitution and provided special arrangements for certain regions.
- **Later additions:** Articles 371-A to 371-J were added later through constitutional amendments under.
- **States Covered:** The 12 States are Maharashtra, Gujarat, Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Sikkim, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa and Karnataka.
- **Different Safeguards:** These provisions vary from state to state and provide safeguards relating to local political, cultural, social or economic interests.

Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) 3.0

News: Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the Operational Guidelines for DILRMP 3.0 (2026–2031) in New Delhi.

About Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) 3.0



Source – NTV

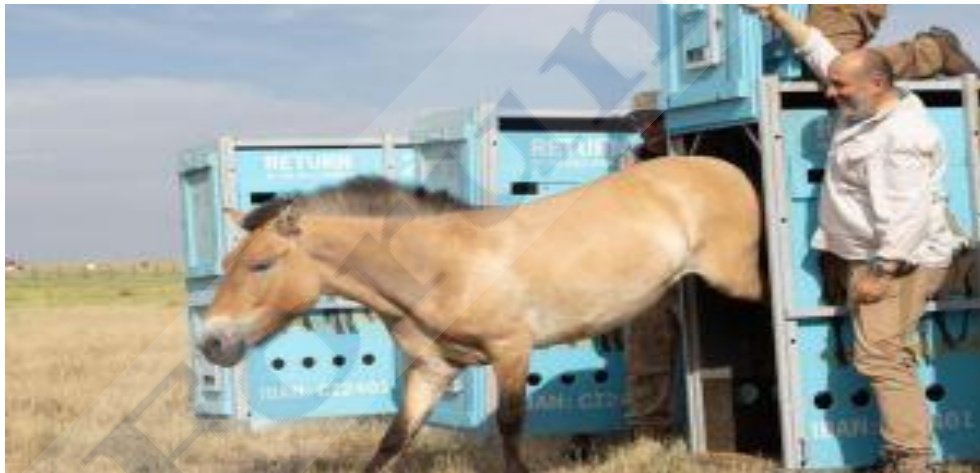
- **DILRMP 3.0** is a five-year programme to build an integrated, GIS-enabled “Land Stack” for land administration.
- **Evolution:** In 2008, Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) and Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA&ULR) were merged into the National Land Records Modernization Programme (NILRMP).
 - In 2016, NILRMP was revamped as DILRMP, which has now been expanded as DILRMP 3.0 (2026–2031).
- **Type of Scheme:** It is a Central Sector Scheme.
- **Funding:** It has 100% central funding with an anticipated financial outlay of ₹565.50 crore.
- **Implemented by:** The Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development, will implement the programme across all States and Union Territories.

- **Monitored by:** Real-time progress will be monitored through the upgraded DILRMP-MIS dashboard.
- **Aim:** It aims to make land governance transparent, accessible and citizen-friendly by integrating land records, maps, property registration and court cases.
- **Key Features**
 - **Universal Bhu-Aadhaar (ULPIN):** It will assign a 14-digit unique identification number to every land parcel, ensuring a secure and unmistakable identity for each property.
 - **Digitisation and Georeferencing of Maps:** It will completely digitise cadastral maps and embed them with exact geographical coordinates.
 - **Paperless Property Registration:** It will introduce end-to-end online and paperless property registration along with a new Registration Repository.
 - **Integrated Revenue Courts:** It will introduce a paperless Revenue Court Case Management System (RCCMS) integrated with land records to track disputes and reduce the time and cost of legal battles.

Przewalski's Horse

News: Two Przewalski's horse foals were born in central Kazakhstan, the first in the country in over 200 years.

About Przewalski's Horse



Source – BBC

- **Przewalski's horse is subspecies of wild horse.**
 - It is the **only living wild relative of the domestic horse.**
- **Scientific name:** Its scientific name is **E. ferus przewalskii**.
 - It is locally known as **kertagy**.
- **Distribution:** It once lived across the grasslands of **Kazakhstan, Russia, Mongolia, and northern China.**
 - It was once considered **extinct in the wild** but **survived** through **captive-breeding** programs.
 - It was **reintroduced** into **Kazakhstan in 2024** after a 200-year absence through the **"Return of the Wild Horses" programme.**
- **Characteristics:**

- **Appearance:** They have **tan** to reddish brown fur with white on the belly, dark brown on the lower legs and a white muzzle.
- There are markings in its body which are of yellowish-white belly, dark lower legs, and zebra-like stripes behind the knees.
 - It has a **stiff, dark brown mane**.
 - It has a **stocky build with short legs**.
 - Their **large eyes are on the sides of their head**, giving them a wide view to spot predators while grazing or drinking.
 - They grow a **thick coat in winter to stay warm and shed it in summer to keep cool**.
 - It can **withstand harsh winters with temperatures dropping below minus 30 degrees Celsius**.
 - Their **tan color helps them blend into the grasslands and deserts where they live**.
 - **Weight:** They weigh **247-383 kg**.
 - **Height:** It stand **48-58 inches (120-146 cm) tall** at the shoulder.
- **Diet:** In the wild, it feed mainly on **grass and leaves from shrubs and trees**.
- **Behaviour:** It is a **very social animal forming herds** consisting of **one stallion and four to 10 mares with their offspring**.
 - The stallion is **responsible for the herd's protection and coordinates daily movements of the group**.
 - Herds don't mix **but share territory**.
 - They **digest food through hindgut fermentation**, allowing them to survive on large amounts of low-quality vegetation and water.
- **Ecological Importance:** They **graze on dry vegetation to reduce wildfire risk**, their **hooves disturb the soil letting new plants take root**, and **they disperse seeds across the landscape as they roam**.
- **Conservation status:** It was listed as **extinct-in-the-wild** until one adult was found in **1996**, after which it was **re-listed as critically endangered**.
 - Since 2011, it has been **classified as endangered by the IUCN**.

Historic City of Barakuru

News: A rare Sidithale Veeragallu hero stone, depicting self-sacrifice, was recently discovered near the Panchalingeshwara Temple in Barkur.

About Historic City of Barakuru



Source – Academia edu

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- **Location:** Barakuru is located in **Udupi district, Karnataka**.
 - It lies on the banks of the **Sita River**, about **5 km east of the Arabian Sea coast**.
- **Ancient names:** The town was **known as Varakula, Barakanur, and Barahkanyapura**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Ancient Port:** Barakuru was a **busy commercial centre** from around the **2nd century B.C.**
 - It traded with foreign nations across the **Arabian Sea**.
 - **Alupa Capital:** The **Alupa rulers** made it their capital during the **10th–11th centuries A.D.**, turning it into a **political centre**.
 - **Later Rule:** It later **became the provincial headquarters of the Hoysalas and Vijayanagara Empire**.
 - **Temple Heritage:** It once had **365 temples**, while the **Panchalingeshwara Temple** remains its **most famous temple**.
 - **Cultural Heritage:** It was a **Jain settlement in ancient times**.
 - It became an **important centre of Tuluva culture** under the **Alupa rulers**.
 - **Organized Settlement:** It was **divided into ten extensions called Keris**, which were named after the **professional residents** living in them.
 - Each Keri had its **own water tank and several temples**, reflecting the **organized settlement pattern of the city**.

Recent Findings

- **Hero Stone:** A **Sidithale Veeragallu**, dating to the **late 13th or early 14th century**, was found **near Panchalingeshwara Temple**.
- **Depiction:** The stone has **three panels** showing the **warrior's self-sacrifice, his journey towards heaven, and a Shivalinga with Shiva being worshipped**.
- **Similar Stones:** Similar carvings and inscriptions referring to **Sidithale Veeragallu** have been found in other parts of **Karnataka**, but **this appears to be the first such stone discovered in coastal Karnataka**.
- **Preservation:** The stone has been **brought into the Panchalingeshwara Temple premises**, where it is preserved.

Bail Pola Festival

News: Bail Pola is observed by farmers to honour bulls and oxen for their vital contribution to agriculture and rural livelihoods.

About Bail Pola Festival



Source – Incredible India

- **Bail Pola Festival** is a traditional festival that **celebrates the bond between farmers and their bulls** and **expresses gratitude for their agricultural service**.
 - It is also known as **Pola Amavasya, Kushopatini Amavasya and Pithori Amavasya**.
- **Region:** It is **predominantly celebrated in Maharashtra**.
 - It is also observed in **Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Telangana**.
- **Timing:** It is celebrated **on the Amavasya of the Shravan month, generally during the August–September period**.
- **Key Features of Bail Pola Festival**
 - **Agricultural Significance:** The festival **recognizes the vital role of bulls and oxen** in ploughing fields, preparing land and supporting farmers' livelihoods.
 - **Rituals and Worship:** Farmers wash the cattle, give them oil massages, decorate them with flowers, ribbons and **bells**, and perform their **puja and aarti**.
 - **Hindu faith:** The festival is linked with the belief that **young Lord Krishna killed the demon Polasur on this day**.
 - Another tradition **connects it with Lord Shiva and his bull Nandi**.

South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)

News: South Asian countries adopted the Kathmandu Declaration to strengthen coordinated action against illegal wildlife trade and related organised crime.

About South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)



Figure 10. Source – SAWEN

cooperation.

- **Key Functions**
 - **Policy Harmonisation:** It promotes **harmonisation and standardisation** of laws and policies **concerning fauna and flora conservation**.
 - **Information Sharing:** It promotes **research, intelligence and information sharing, training, technical support and exchange of experiences**.
 - **National Action Plans:** It **encourages** member countries to **prepare and implement National Action Plans to curb wildlife crime**.

Kathmandu Declaration under SAWEN

- **SAWEN** is a **regional inter-governmental wildlife law enforcement support body of South Asian countries**.
- **Origin:** It was formally **launched in January 2011 at Paro, Bhutan**.
- **Members:** It comprises **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka**.
- **Secretariat:** Its Secretariat was **formally established in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 2011**.
- **Aim:** It promotes **regional cooperation to combat wildlife crime through communication, coordination, collaboration, capacity building and**

- **Adoption:** It was adopted in September 2026 at the first General Assembly of SAWEN held in Kathmandu.
- **Coordinated Action:** Member countries agreed to strengthen coordinated action against illegal wildlife trade and related transnational organised crime.
- **Financial Measures:** They agreed on financial investigations, anti-money laundering measures, asset recovery and effective prosecution.
- **Transnational Crime:** They supported efforts to recognise serious wildlife crime as a form of transnational organised crime.

Bab el-Mandeb Strait

News: The Houthis have captured Mokha port and Perim Island in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, raising concerns over this vital shipping route.

About Bab el-Mandeb Strait



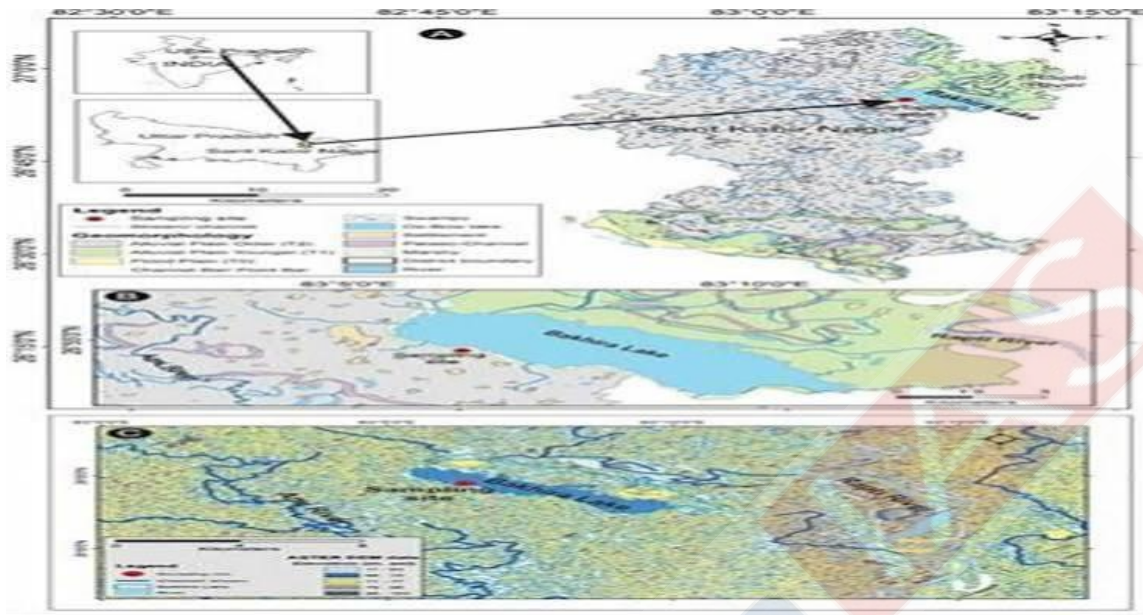
Figure 11. Source – BBC

- **Location:**
 - Bab el-Mandeb Strait lies at the southern tip of the Red Sea, between Yemen and the Horn of Africa.
 - It lies between the Arabian Peninsula and the African continent.
- **Connectivity:** It connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean through the Red Sea and Suez Canal.
- **Channels Structure**
 - The strait is about 30 km wide.
 - It is divided into two channels by Perim Island.
 - The eastern channel is called Alexander's Strait, while the western channel is the Dact-el-Mayun Channel.
- **Key Features of Bab el-Mandeb Strait:**
 - **Known as:** It is also known as the "Gate of Tears", referring to the large number of shipwrecks that have occurred in this region.
 - **Global trade route:** It is a crucial link in the trade route connecting the Mediterranean to Asia.
 - **Alternative to Hormuz:** It provides an alternative route for Gulf oil exports when the Strait of Hormuz is disrupted.
 - **Indian trade:** Indian exports and imports, including petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, textiles, machinery and engineering products, depend heavily on the Suez route.
- **Current Crisis:** The Iran-backed Houthis have captured Mokha port and Perim Island, strengthening their position around the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

Bakhira Lake

News: A new study of magnetic minerals in Bakhira Lake sediments over 25,000 years reveals how past climate changes affected rainfall, weathering, sediment transport, and lake processes in northern India.

About Bakhira Lake



Source: DD News

- **Location:** Bakhira Lake is located at Sant Kabir Nagar district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.
 - It forms part of the Ghaghara-Rapti alluvial system.
- It is one of the largest wetlands in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Formation:** It is a perennial oxbow/floodplain wetland formed through the migration and subsequent cut-off of the [Rapti River](#).
- Its floodplain-lacustrine setting favours the accumulation and preservation of sediments derived from both the lake and surrounding catchment.
- **Area:** It is spread over 29 km².
- **Bird sanctuary:** It was declared as a bird sanctuary in 1990.
- **Ramsar site:** It was designated as a Ramsar Site in 2022.
- **Fauna:** In winter (November–January), birds from Tibet, China, Europe, and Siberia travel up to 5,000 km to the lake.
 - It also supports over 30 fish species, mainly *Labeo rohita* and *Chana sp.*
- **Significance:** It supports migratory and resident birds, fishing, farming, and local livelihoods.

Program Electronic Review Management (PERM)

News: The U.S.A Department of Labor has suspended IT services giant Cognizant's filings under Program Electronic Review Management (PERM) as authorities investigate alleged fraud and misuse of employment-based immigration programmes.

About Program Electronic Review Management (PERM)



Source: TOI

- **Program Electronic Review Management (PERM)** is the system through which **employers generally obtain labour certification before sponsoring** a foreign employee for an employment-based Green Card.
 - PERM filing is **done by the employer on behalf of the worker**.
- **Administered by:** It is administered by the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)** for processing permanent labor-certification applications.
- **Intent of the process:** The process is intended **to establish that hiring a foreign worker permanently** will not adversely affect the job opportunities, wages or working conditions of U.S.A workers.
- **How does it work:**
 - Before filing, **an employer must obtain a prevailing wage determination** for the position and carry out prescribed recruitment.
 - Once the Labour Department certifies the application, the **employer can proceed to the next stage of the Green Card process**.
 - **The date on which the Labour Department accepts the labour certification** application also generally **becomes the worker's "priority date"**, which is effectively their place in the queue for an employment-based immigrant visa.
 - This is **particularly important for workers from countries such as India**, where **demand for Green Cards far exceeds the number available**.

Difference Between H-1B and PERM

- An H-1B visa is a **temporary, non-immigrant work visa** that allows U.S.A employers to employ foreign professionals in specialised occupations.
 - PERM is **part of the process** used by **employers to sponsor foreign workers** for permanent residency or a Green Card.
- The **H-1B and PERM processes can operate at the same time**.
- **Example:** An Indian engineer may work for Cognizant in the U.S.A on an H-1B visa while Cognizant separately files a PERM application to sponsor that employee for a Green Card.
- **Note:** The **suspension of PERM filings does not automatically cancel** an employee's existing H-1B status or an already-issued Green Card.

Cultivation of Moth Bean in India

News: ICAR-CAZRI's four new moth bean varieties showed strong resilience during the prolonged moisture stress in Kharif 2026.

About Cultivation of Moth Bean in India

Moth Bean Farming



Figure 12. Source – Agri Farming

- **Moth bean (*Vigna aconitifolia*)** is a drought-resistant, short-duration kharif pulse.
- **Known as:** It is commonly known as **mat bean, Turkish gram and dew bean.**
- **Distribution:** It is cultivated most **extensively in the Thar Desert region of western Rajasthan**, as well as parts of **Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab.**
- **Agro-Climatic Requirements**
 - **Climate:** It grows well in **arid and semi-arid regions** and can **withstand high temperatures** without adversely affecting flowering or fruit development.
 - **Temperature:** Its optimum growth and development occur at 25–37°C.
- **Rainfall:** It requires **around 250–500 mm of rainfall.**
- **Soil:** It prefers **well-drained sandy-loam soils** but can **also grow on poor, light-textured soils with low organic matter, including sand dunes.**
- **Sowing period:** Timely sowing is carried out with the onset of the **monsoon in July.**
- **Key Features**
 - **Drought and Heat Tolerance:** It can withstand **prolonged moisture stress** and **maintain growth under rainfed conditions.**
 - **Developmental Plasticity:** It is the ability of a plant to **adjust its growth and maturity according to environmental conditions.**
 - In moth bean, it **flowers at around 30 days after sowing and adjusts its growth and maturity according to available soil moisture**, helping it adapt to changing rainfall conditions.
 - **Soil Conservation:** Its prostrate, spreading canopy helps bind sandy soil and **retain moisture in the rhizosphere.**

Recent Development

- **New Varieties:** ICAR-CAZRI (Indian Council of Agricultural Research–Central Arid Zone Research Institute) has released four varieties –
 - **CAZRI Moth-4, CAZRI Moth-5, CAZRI Moth-6 and CAZRI Moth-7** – in the last three years.
- **Moisture-Stress Resilience:** During Kharif 2026, these varieties maintained good growth, green appearance and profuse pod development despite a prolonged moisture-stress period of around 35 days.
- **Seed Multiplication:** The seed is **being multiplied by the Rajasthan State Seeds Corporation, National Seeds Corporation and selected private players.**

OPU-IVF Calf Born in Badri Cattle

News: A healthy Badri female calf was born through OPU-IVF after a Badri embryo was transferred into a Sahiwal recipient cow.

About OPU-IVF Calf Born in Badri Cattle



Source – IE

- A healthy **Badri female calf** was born through **Ovum Pick-Up and In Vitro Fertilisation (OPU-IVF) technology**.
- **Scientific Collaboration:** ICAR-NDRI, Karnal, and GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, collaborated to establish advanced reproductive technologies for the conservation and multiplication of Badri germplasm.
- **Process of OPU-IVF Technology:**
 - **Oocyte Collection:** Oocytes are female reproductive cells (egg cells) of cattle. These egg cells were collected from selected genetically valuable Badri donor cows through ultrasound-guided ovum pick-up.
 - **Fertilisation:** They were matured and fertilised in vitro using semen from a genetically superior Badri bull.
 - **Embryo culture:** Embryos were cultured under controlled laboratory conditions and transferred into synchronized recipient cows.
 - **Embryo transfer:** One Badri embryo was transferred into a Sahiwal cow, which gave birth to the calf.

About Badri Cattle

- **Naming :** The breed derived its name from Badrinath.
 - It was earlier known as the 'pahadi' cow.
- **Habitat:** It is adapted to the Himalayan environment and feeds on herbs and shrubs available in the mountains.
- **Distribution:** It is found only in the hill districts of Uttarakhand.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Physical Features:** It is small in size, has long legs and has black, brown, red, white or grey body colours.
 - **Milk Quality:** Its milk has rich medicinal content and high organic value due to its feeding on herbs and shrubs.
 - **Disease Resistance:** It is comparatively more resistant to diseases, mostly due to its eating habits.
 - **Local Adaptation:** It is adapted to hill terrain and local environmental conditions and is suitable for low-input farming systems.
- **Threats:** Indigenous cattle breeds face pressure from cross-breeding and shrinking herd sizes across India.

- **Status:** Badri is the **first certified cattle breed of Uttarakhand**.
 - It was **included as the Badri breed by the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources**.

Steel Slag Road Technology

News: India has set the Guinness World Record with World's Longest Steel Slag Road at Raigarh in Chhattisgarh.

About Steel Slag Road Technology



Figure 13. Source – CSIR

- **Steel slag is a waste by-product of the steel manufacturing process.**
- It is produced during the **separation of the molten steel from impurities in steel-making furnaces.**
- The slag occurs as a **molten liquid melt** and is a **complex solution of silicates and oxides** that **solidifies upon cooling.**
- **Use in road materials:** It **cannot automatically be used as road material in its untreated form.**
 - **Processing** converts suitable slag into **aggregates of specified sizes and engineering properties.**
 - These **aggregates** can then **replace natural stone** in appropriate road layers when supported by suitable pavement design, testing and quality control.
- **Advantages:**
 - **Steel Slag Road Technology** can **reduce road construction costs** by around **40 per cent** while delivering **four times the strength** of conventional roads.
 - **Environment friendly:** India is the world's second largest steel producer. For per ton of steel production around 200 kg Steel slag is generated as solid waste.
 - Steel slag generation in the country is about 19 Million tons per annum and expected to reach 60 million tons by 2030.
 - This huge quantity of steel slag is piled up in and around the steel plants as big mounds and becoming the source of air, water, and land pollution.
 - Hence, the use of steel slag in road construction is an environmentally friendly cost-effective method.
 - **Cheaper:** Steel slag road costs are **about 30% cheaper** than conventional making of roads.
 - **Less Maintenance cost:** Steel slag roads have been found to **last ten years as compared to three to four years** for bitumen roads, thus bringing down sharply the maintenance costs.
 - **More durable:** Steel slag roads are **more durable and resistant** to weather unpredictability.

Notable Uses of Steel Slag Road

- In 2022, Surat in Gujarat became the **first city in the country** to get a **processed steel slag (industrial waste) road**.
- The **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** has also **used steel slag** to construct a **long-lasting heavy-duty road** at Arunachal Pradesh along the **India-China border area**.
- A **1.85-km road** at Jindal Steel's Raigarh facility in Chhattisgarh has been recognised as the **world's longest road built** with processed steel-slag aggregates in 2026.
- **CSIR- Central Road Research Institute (CRRI), New Delhi** has **pioneered** the development of use of Steel slag in road construction.

Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)

News: Colombo Security Conclave Table Top Exercise concludes at Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam.

About Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)

- 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.
- **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.

Brač Island and Adriatic Sea

News: A massive wildfire on Croatia's Brač Island located in Adriatic Sea, forced nearly 700 evacuations, while strong winds hampered firefighting efforts.

About Brač Island



Source: Britannica

- **Location:** It is a rugged, mountainous island in the Adriatic Sea that is part of [Croatia](#).
 - It is **positioned just across Split (distance 12 km)**, the second biggest city in Croatia, separated by mainland by the Brac channel.
- **Area:** It covers an area of about 395 sq. km, making it one of the larger islands in the Adriatic.
- **Highest Point:** Its highest point is Vidova Mountain, rising to about 780 metres, making it the highest point among the Adriatic islands.
- **Climate:** Its climate is characterized as **Medireannean climate**.
- **Economy:** **Mechanised marble quarrying** is an **important economic activity** and provides an export commodity.
- It is famous for its **white-pebble Zlatni Rat beach**, limestone quarries, and excellent windsurfing conditions.

About Adriatic Sea



Figure 14. Source: World Atlas

- The **Adriatic Sea** is defined as a **temperate semi-enclosed basin** situated in the **central Mediterranean Sea**.
 - It acts as a **geographic divider** separating the **Italian Peninsula** from the **Balkan Peninsula**.
- **Borders:** It is bordered by **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, and Slovenia**.
 - Its **southern boundary** is situated between **Albania and Italy's Salento Peninsula**.
 - The **Strait of Otranto** links it with the **Ionian Sea** to the southeast.
- It is surrounded by the **Apennines, Alps, Dinarids, and Helenids mountain ranges**.

- It is **geographically divided into three basins**, namely, the Northern Adriatic, the Middle Adriatic, and the Southern Adriatic.
- **Major rivers:** Reno, Po, Adige, Brenta, Piave, Soča/Isonzo, Zrmanja, Krka, Cetina, Neretva and Drini river flows into the sea.
- **Major seaports:** Ancona, Bari, Brindisi, Dubrovnik, Rijeka, Split and Venice located along the Adriatic Sea.

Schizopygopsis waddellii

News: Scientists recorded *Schizopygopsis waddellii* for the first time from a natural lake in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.

About *Schizopygopsis waddellii*



Figure 15. Source – NOA

- ***Schizopygopsis waddellii*** is a rare species of high-altitude Himalayan fish.
- **Family:** It belongs to the Cyprinidae family.
- It is commonly known as the Tibetan fish or Waddell's snow trout.
- **Habitat:** It is adapted to harsh, high-altitude freshwater ecosystems across the Tibetan Plateau and the Eastern Himalayas.
- **Distribution:** It was previously known only from the Tibetan and China Plateau region, including Yamdrok Lake in Tibet.
 - It was recorded in India for the first time from Pangkang Teng Tso Lake in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Key features:**
 - **Body:** It has an elongated, cylindrical body with a dark greyish to olive upper side and lighter underside.
 - **Lateral and Caudal Features:** It has a complete lateral line and a deeply forked caudal fin.
 - **Snout structure:** It has a distinctive hard plate-like structure around the lower lip and snout.
 - **Sexual Dimorphism:** Males have small visible nuptial tubercles or spines and brighter coloration, while females lack spines and have duller coloration.
 - **High-Altitude Adaptation:** It is adapted to freezing water temperatures, low oxygen saturation, and oligotrophic high-altitude lake environments.
 - **Identification:** Its identity was confirmed through morphological examination and mitochondrial DNA analysis.
- **Threats:** The species may be vulnerable to disturbances in fragile, high-altitude freshwater ecosystems, making the conservation of these habitats important.
- **Conservation Status:**

- IUCN Red List: Least Concern (LC)

Ramanathaswamy Temple

News: At the 2026 BRICS Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping were seen before an image of the Ramanathaswamy Temple's 1,212-pillar corridor.

About Ramanathaswamy Temple

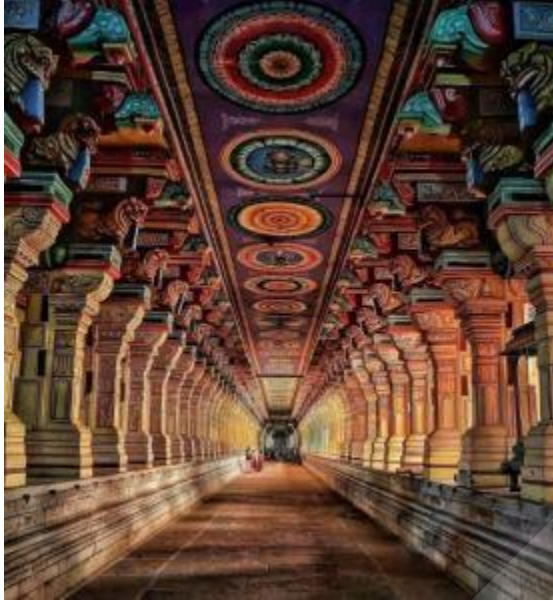


Figure 16. Source – Trade India

- **Location:** Ramanathaswamy Temple is located in Rameswaram on Pamban Island, Tamil Nadu.
- **Religious Association:** It is a historic temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.
 - According to the Ramayana, Lord Rama is believed to have worshipped Lord Shiva at the site after returning from Lanka.
- **Architectural Style:** The temple is built in the Dravidian style of architecture.
- **Historical Evolution:**
 - **12th century:** The Chola kings built the first stone temple, which later developed through successive additions.
 - **Later period:** The Pandya and Vijayanagar rulers expanded the temple, while Krishna Deva Raya made significant gifts in 1513.
- **Nayaka period:** The Sethupathi kings of Ramnad became guardians of the temple and played a key role in shaping its present form.
- **17th century:** According to an 1885 report by Henry Hardy Cole, the temple in its present form was rebuilt after repeated earlier sackings.
- **Key Architectural Features:**
 - **Grand corridors:** The outer corridor has 1,212 intricately carved pillars, each about 6.9 metres high, with the corridors extending roughly 1.17 km.
 - **Visual depth:** The parallel rows of pillars create a striking effect as they appear to converge towards a distant point.
 - **Lofty gopurams:** The eastern Rajagopuram rises 126 feet across nine levels.
 - **Sacred water bodies:** The complex has 36 water bodies, including 22 sacred wells (theerthams).
 - **Intricate sculptures:** The pillars feature floral motifs and mythical creatures.
 - **Sacred sanctum:** The sanctum houses Lord Ramanathaswamy, one of the 12 sacred Jyotirlingas dedicated to Lord Shiva.

Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)

News: The Department of Telecommunications has helped prevent suspected cyber fraud losses of more than five thousand crore rupees through its Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) within fifteen months of its launch.

About Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)



Source – News On Air

- It is a **multi- dimensional analytical tool** to empower financial institutions with advance actionable **intelligence for cyber fraud prevention**.
- This initiative **aims** to bolster **cyber protection by identifying mobile numbers** linked to potential financial fraud before a transaction takes place.
- **Developed by:** Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under its **Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP)**
- **Working:** The FRI is a **risk-based metric** that classifies mobile numbers into **three categories** Medium, High, and Very High based on their likelihood of involvement in financial fraud.
 - The classification draws from a comprehensive analysis using inputs from various platforms, including the **Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre's National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP)**, DoT's **Chakshu platform**, and **intelligence** shared by banks and financial institutions.
- It empowers **stakeholders**-especially **banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies, and UPI service providers** to prioritize enforcement and take **additional customer protection** measures in case a mobile number with high risk.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

News: NCPCR summoned Meta officials on September 9, 2026, over an inquiry into child sexual exploitation and abuse material on Instagram.

About National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)



Source – NCPCR

- The **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** is a **statutory body** constituted to **protect, promote and defend child rights in the country**.
- **Established:** It was **constituted under Section 3** of the **Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005**.
- **Constituted By:** It is **constituted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- **Target Group:** It protects the **rights of children below 18 years of age**.
 - It also focuses on children in distress, marginalized and disadvantaged children, children in conflict with law, and children without family.
- **Composition**
 - **Members:** The Commission consists of a **Chairperson and six Members**, of whom **at least two must be women**.
 - **Appointment:** The **Central Government** appoints the Chairperson.
 - The appointment is made **on the recommendation of a three-member selection committee chaired by the Minister in charge of the Ministry or Department dealing with children**.
 - **Expertise:** Members are selected for **expertise** in education, child health and development, juvenile justice, care of marginalised children or children with disabilities, elimination of child labour, child psychology or sociology, and laws relating to children.
 - **Tenure and Age Limits:** The Chairperson and Members may serve **for a maximum of two terms**.
 - The **maximum age is 65 years for the Chairperson and 60 years for Members**.
- **Core Mandate**
 - **Legal Safeguards:** It reviews **legal safeguards for children** and **recommends measures for their effective implementation**.
 - **Child Rights Violations:** It **inquires into complaints** and **takes suo motu notice** of deprivation or violation of child rights and non-implementation of protective laws.
 - **Protection and Inspection:** It **investigates violations, inspects institutions** where children are detained or housed, and **recommends remedial action**.
 - **Policies and Awareness:** It **studies treaties and policies, promotes research and child-rights literacy, and encourages consideration of children's views**.

- **Law Monitoring:** It monitors specified safeguards under the RTE Act, 2009, POCSO Act, 2012, and Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act.
- **Child Care Institutions:** It monitors Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and carries out their social audit as directed by the Supreme Court.
- **Powers**
 - **Civil Court Powers:** Summon persons, examine them on oath, require documents, receive evidence on affidavits and requisition public records.
 - **Legal Action:** Recommend prosecution or other action against persons responsible for serious violations.
 - **Judicial and Relief Measures:** Approach the Supreme Court or High Court and recommend interim relief to victims or their families.

Initiatives Taken by NCPDR

- **POCSO e-Box:** An online mechanism for reporting cases of child sexual abuse under the POCSO Act.
- **e-BaalNidaan:** An online complaint management system for registering and tracking complaints relating to violations of child rights.
- **Baal Swaraj – CiSS Application:** A platform to identify children in street situations and facilitate their rescue and rehabilitation.
- **POCSO Tracking Portal:** A system for real-time tracking of child sexual abuse cases, including rehabilitation and victim-support services.
- **MAPI App:** A monitoring application for seamless and real-time inspection of Child Care Institutions.
- **GHAR – GO:** A portal for digitally monitoring and tracking the restoration and repatriation of children.
- **Samvardhan:** An exercise for vulnerability mapping to combat child trafficking.
- **Quick Response Cell (QRC):** A mechanism for quick intervention and rescue in situations involving children in distress.

Guneri Inland Mangrove

News: Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister felicitated the Guneri Inland Mangrove Village Biodiversity Management Committee for its sustained efforts to conserve the Guneri inland mangroves.

About Guneri Inland Mangrove

- **Guneri Inland Mangrove** is a natural inland mangrove site located in Kutch district of Gujarat.
- It is located at a distance of 45 km from the Arabian Sea and 4 km from the Kori Creek, where seawater never approaches.
- **Uniqueness:** It is one of only eight known inland mangrove locations in the world and the last of its kind in India.
- **Recognition:** It was declared Gujarat's first Biodiversity Heritage Site in January 2025.
- **Area:** It spreads over 33 hectares including the buffer zone.
- **Formation:** It may have originated either after the Miocene-period marine transgression or along the banks of the lost [Saraswati River](#) in the Great Rann of Kachchh, which is believed to have existed around 3000–4000 BC.
 - The mangroves survive on limestone deposits connected to the seabed, which allow a continuous flow of groundwater.
- **Features**

- It has **inland mangrove** of **considerable height**.
- It is **devoid of any sludge**, and is **spread over a flat piece of land** like a forest.
- It is **unique as it grows inland**, away from regular seawater and muddy coastal conditions.
- Unlike typical coastal mangroves, it supports **Avicennia marina** through **underground saline water and tidal influence** from nearby Kori Creek.
 - It is also a unique example of **nature's adaptation and resilience in an arid region**.
- **Fauna:** The Guneri inland mangrove area **houses chinkara, ratel, around 20 migratory and 25 resident migratory avifaunal species**.

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