

Factly Weekly

Compilation

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Exam**

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Satellite Smart Anti-Airfield Weapons (SAT-SAAW)

News: The Ministry of Defence signed a ₹810.79 crore contract with Bharat Dynamics Limited for 160 SAT-SAAW for the Indian Air Force.

About Satellite Smart Anti-Airfield Weapons (SAT-SAAW)

- **SAT-SAAW** is an **air-to-ground precision-guided glide bomb**.
- It is designed to neutralise enemy airfields **from a long stand-off range**.
- **Developed by:** The system was indigenously designed and developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- **Key Features of SAT-SAAW:**
 - **Precision Guidance:** SAAW uses **inertial navigation and signals** from **satellite systems** such as **GPS and GLONASS** for guidance.
 - **Range and Weight:** It is a **125-kilograms class weapon** with an effective **range of up to 110 km**.
 - **Target Capability:** It **can target** critical airfield infrastructure, including **runways, bunkers, aircraft hangars and hardened aircraft shelters**.
 - **Aircraft Compatibility:** It can be **launched from Su-30 MKI, Hawk and Jaguar aircraft**.
 - **Indigenous Content:** The system **will have 60% indigenous content**, including the **indigenisation of the Initial Measurement Unit, Long Impact Delay Fuse and Twin Store Carrier**.

India's First eVTOL Aircraft – e200X

News: The Technology Development Board approved ₹285 crore support to Ubifly Technologies for advancing its indigenous advanced air mobility solution.

About India's first eVTOL aircraft – e200X

- **Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL)** aircraft are **battery-powered aircraft** that can **take off and land vertically** before transitioning to forward flight.
- The **e200X** is a **specific eVTOL aircraft** being **developed in India for advanced air mobility**.
 - It is a **three-seater, zero-emission aircraft**.
 - It is designed for **one pilot and two passengers**.
- **Developed by:** In India, the e200X is **developed by Ubifly Technologies Private Limited (The ePlane Company), Chennai**.

- **Financial Support:** The Technology Development Board (TDB) approved ₹285 crore under the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund.
- **Funding Mode:** The support will be provided through **Optionally Convertible Debentures (OCD)**.
 - The project has a total approved cost of ₹570 crore.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Working Mechanism:** The aircraft can **take off and land vertically using electric propulsion** before switching to forward flight.
 - **Performance:** It has a targeted **range of 110 km and an ideal speed of 160 kmph**.
 - **Indigenous Technology:** It uses **vertical rotors, forward propellers, flight-control algorithms, power-distribution controllers and battery-pack modules** with integrated cooling systems.
 - **Landing System:** Its landing gear **supports both conventional and vertical landing**, providing operational flexibility.
 - **Technology Development:** The project **aims to advance the aircraft from Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 to TRL 9** through further testing, validation and scale-up.
- **Applications:** It is intended for **advanced air mobility**, including **emergency medical services, airport transfers and urban passenger transport**.

Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited (MSE)

News: The shares of National Stock Exchange (NSE) will also trade on the Metropolitan Stock Exchange (MSE).

About Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited (MSE)

- The **Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited (MSE)** is a **national stock exchange** that provides a **technology-driven electronic trading platform** across multiple financial segments, including equities, equity derivatives, currency derivatives, and debt securities.
- **Recognised by:** It is recognized by the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** since 2008 under the **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956**.
- **Functions:**
 - It **ensures seamless and secure market operations** for investors, brokers, and corporates by integrating advanced electronic trading systems, robust risk management mechanisms, and real-time surveillance tools,

- It also **actively contributes to the development of India's financial ecosystem** by promoting investor education, market awareness, and regulatory compliance.
- **SX40 Index:** It is released by MSE. It is **designed to represent a diversified set of leading companies** across key sectors.
 - It serves as a transparent yardstick for performance measurement and supports investors and product issuers with a credible reference for India's equity markets.
- **Recent changes:** The [National Stock Exchange \(NSE\)](#) is going to have its shares traded on the **Metropolitan Stock Exchange (MSE)** along with the [Bombay Stock Exchange \(BSE\)](#).
 - The shares of NSE will be available for trading on MSE under the **"Permitted to Trade" category**.
 - NSE has selected BSE as its designated stock exchange, but other recognised exchanges are also allowed to trade NSE shares.

Key Facts about Naoero

News: The President of Naoero recently announced the change of name of country from Nauru to Naoero in the U.N. General Assembly.

Key Facts about Naoero

- **Location:** Naoero is a tiny island located in **north-east of Australia, 42 km south of the equator**.
 - It lies within the **Micronesia sub-region of Oceania**, with its **nearest neighbour** being **Banaba (part of Kiribati)** about 300 km to the east.
- It was **formerly** known as **Pleasant Island**.
- **Climate:** Its climate is **hot and very humid year-round** because of its **proximity** to the equator and the ocean.
- **Reef system:** A **coral reef** surrounds the entire island which is **dotted with pinnacles**. Hence, there **no specific port located** at the coast of the country.
- **Geology:** It is a **phosphate-rock island** with rich deposits near the surface.
- **Highest point:** The **Command Ridge** is the highest point at **71 m** above sea level.
- **Smallest island country:** It is the **third-smallest country** in the world, after Vatican City and Monaco, with an area of **only 21 sq. km**.
 - So, it is the **smallest island nation** in the world.

- **International co-operation:** It is a member of the **United Nations**, the **Commonwealth of Nations**, and the **Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States**.
- **Governance system:** It is a **republic** with a **parliamentary system** of government.
 - The **president** is both **head of state and head of government** and is dependent on **parliamentary confidence** to remain president.
- **Water source:** The **Buada Lagoon**, located inland, is a **rare freshwater resource** but is an **endorheic basin** (not connected to the sea).

Tokay Geckos

News: DRI officers intercepted two persons in Mariani, Assam and seized 86 live endangered Tokay Geckos under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

About Tokay Geckos

- Tokay gecko is a **lizard species** with orange-spotted blue-grey skin.
 - They are **one of the largest geckos alive today** which can grow up to 14 inches in length.
- **Scientific name:** Gekko gekko
- **Habitat:** They live in **tropical rainforests, rock crevices or manmade environments** with a variety of microhabitats.
- **Distribution:** They are found across southeast and east Asia.
- **Species:** Two variants of tokay geckos exist: **a red-spotted and a black-spotted**
- **Characterstics:**
 - **Appearance:** They have **thick, cylindrical bodies**, with heads set apart from their necks.
 - Their limbs are well-defined and powerful, and their bodies are covered in spots.
 - **Camouflage:** They can **changes its skin colour** to blend with its surroundings.
 - **Skin folds:** Their **skin folds help it blend with tree surfaces** and **avoid casting shadows**.
 - **Tail:** They can **drop its tail to escape predators**, and the tail grows back in about three weeks.
 - **Grip:** Tiny structures called **setae** help them stick strongly to vertical and overhead surfaces.
 - **Bite:** They are very fast and a **strong bite**.

- **Eyes:** They have **two large eyes** and a light-sensitive **third eye** called the parietal eye.
- **Smell:** They **uses its nose and tongue to detect scents** through the **Jacobson's organ**.
- **Behaviour:**
 - They are **arboreal**.
 - They are **solitary, nocturnal hunters** and are **more likely to sit and wait for prey than to actively forage**.
 - They **communicate vocally** to find members of the opposite sex during the breeding season.
- **Diet:** They are **insectivorous, and eat pests** such as cockroaches. They may also **eat small rats, mice and snakes**.
- **Threats:** They face major threats from the **illegal wildlife trade and hunting**.
- **Conservation status:**
 - **IUCN: Least Concern**
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: **Schedule I**
 - **CITES: Appendix-II**

SWIFT Payment System and its Alternatives

News: The BRICS Summit discussed increasing trade and payments in national currencies amid efforts to develop alternatives to the SWIFT system.

About SWIFT Payment System

- **'SWIFT'** stands for the **'Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication'**.
- It is a **messaging network** used by **banks and financial institutions** to **exchange information on financial transactions**.
 - It does **not hold or transfer money or securities**.
- **Global Reach:** It connects **more than 11,000 banking and securities organizations** in over **200 countries and territories**.
- **Headquarter:** Its headquarters is in **Belgium**.

- **Working Mechanism:** Each participant is assigned a unique eight-digit SWIFT code or Bank Identification Code (BIC).
 - The sending bank uses this code to send a SWIFT message to the beneficiary's bank.
 - After the message is received and approved, the money is credited to the required account.
- **Governance:**
 - **Ownership and Control:** It is owned and controlled by its shareholders.
 - **Board:** Shareholders elect a 25-member Board of Directors to govern and oversee the company.
 - **Oversight:** It is overseen by G-10 central banks and the European Central Bank (ECB), led by the National Bank of Belgium.
 - **SWIFT Oversight Forum:** It was established in 2012.
 - It brings the G-10 central banks together with the central banks of India, Australia, Russia, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Türkiye and China.

Alternatives of SWIFT

Project mBridge

- The Project mBridge comprises the Bank of Thailand, Central Bank of the UAE, Digital Currency Institute of China, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, and Saudi Central Bank.
- **Purpose:** It is a multi-Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) platform designed for cross-border payments through direct peer-to-peer CBDC settlement.
- **Technology:** The project developed the mBridge Ledger, a blockchain for multi-currency cross-border CBDC payments.
- **Status:** It attained minimum viability status in 2024.

Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS)

- The Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) is backed by the People's Bank of China.
- **Purpose:** China launched it in 2015 to internationalise yuan use.
- **Working:** It allows global banks to clear cross-border yuan transactions directly onshore.

- **Reach:** It has participants in more than 120 countries, including all BRICS members except India.

System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS)

- The **System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS)** was developed by **Russia in 2014**.
- **Purpose:** It was developed to bypass Western sanctions.
- **Growth:** 50 new entities joined the system in 2023, taking the total to 440.
- **Participation:** More than 100 participants were non-residents.

SEPAM (System for Electronic Payments Messaging)

- The **SEPAMA** is Iran's local interbank telecom system.
- **Connectivity:** It has 52 branches of Iranian banks and four unnamed foreign banks connecting with 106 banks using SPFS.

Chundan Vallam, Nettoor Petti, Bhairavan Theyyam Ritual Art Sculpture

News: The PM Mementos e-Auction 2026 includes 32 mementos from Kerala, highlighting its art, craftsmanship, performing traditions and cultural heritage.

About Chundan Vallam

- **Chundan Vallam** is a historic war boat of Kerala, also known as the traditional snake boat.
- It is famously associated with **Vallamkali**, the traditional boat races held during the Onam festival.
- **Cultural Significance:** Today, Chundan Vallam is a prominent part of Kerala's traditional boat-racing culture.

About Nettoor Petti

- **Nettoor Petti** is a traditional jewellery box of Kerala.
- **Naming:** It is named after **Nettur**, a village near Kozhikode.
- It was traditionally used by women of aristocratic families to store jewellery and other valuable objects.
- **Tachu Sastram:** Its design and construction follow the principles of Tachu Sastram, an ancient architectural science followed in Kerala.
- **Craftsmanship and Materials:** It is made from rosewood and other country woods.
 - The wooden structure has handcrafted hinges and nails, along with decorative polished brass elements.

About Bhairavan Theyyam Ritual Art Sculpture

- The **Bhairavan Theyyam Ritual Art Sculpture** represents **Bhairavan Theyyam**, a ritual dance-art tradition of North Kerala.
- **Mythological Roots:** It represents the **Bhairava aspect of Lord Shiva**, associated with **purification, protection and the Shaivism tradition**.
- **Distinctive Features:** The sculpture depicts **characteristic headgear, facial makeup, breastplates and traditional attire** associated with the ritual tradition.

Nidhi Companies

News: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has issued an advisory cautioning the public about Nidhi Companies and their functioning.

About Nidhi Companies

- **Nidhi Companies** are **Non-Banking Financial Companies** created to **promote saving and thrift among their members**.
 - They are **exempted from the core provisions of the RBI Act**.
 - They are classified as **"Mutual Benefit Financial Company"** by RBI.
- **Regulated by:** They are regulated by the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)** under the **Companies Act, 2013 and Nidhi Rules, 2014**.
- **Members:** A Nidhi Company must have a **minimum of 7 members**, of whom **at least 3 must be appointed as directors**
- **Provisions related to Nidhi Company:**
 - Every company **desirous to function as "Nidhi"** is required to **file application in Form "NDH-4"** for getting itself declared/ updated as "Nidhi".
 - The requirement for Central Government declaration of Nidhi Companies was **reintroduced from 15 August 2019** through amendments to **Section 406 of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Nidhi Rules, 2014**.
 - It can **accept deposits and give loans only to their members**.
 - A Nidhi Company **cannot –**
 - **Open current accounts in the names of its members.**
 - **Deal in chit funds, hire-purchase, leasing, insurance or securities business.**
 - **Issue preference shares, debentures or other debt instruments.**

- The **deposits accepted by these Companies are not insured by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC)**. Therefore, **if a company fails or fraud occurs, recovery of the deposited money may be difficult or incomplete.**

DURGA scheme

News: The Delhi Cabinet recently approved the Driving Upliftment and Rozgar for Women/Transgender Green e-Auto (DURGA) scheme to provide safe and dignified self-employment.

About DURGA scheme

- **DURGA (Driving Upliftment and Rozgar for Women/Transgender Green e-Auto) Scheme** aims to provide **safe, clean and dignified employment opportunities** to women and transgender persons.
- **Launched by:** It is an initiative by the **Delhi Government**.
- **Objective:** It also seeks to **promote women's safety, greater participation of transgender persons** in the **transport sector, last-mile connectivity and clean and sustainable urban transport**.
- **Eligibility:** Women applicants must be **20 to 40 years of age, residents of Delhi**, and must possess a **valid Voter ID, Light Motor Vehicle driving licence and Public Service Vehicle Badge**.
 - A woman with **more than three children** will **not be eligible** for the scheme.
 - The applicant or her family must **not own any registered transport vehicle or three-wheeler**.
 - The applicant's **family income during FY 2025–26 must not exceed ₹5 lakh**.
 - Transgender applicants must submit a **valid transgender certificate issued by the District Magistrate's office** and **must fulfil the other prescribed eligibility conditions**.
 - Applicants will be **able to apply through a dedicated online portal** to be created for the scheme.
- **Key Features:**
 - In the first phase, **1,300 pink electric autos** will be provided, including **1,170 for women and 130 for transgender persons**.
 - Each district will be allocated up to **90 e-autos for women and 10 e-autos for transgender persons**.
 - The e-autos will have a **mandatory three-year lock-in period**, during which they cannot be sold, transferred or disposed of.

- The e-autos will carry **DURGA branding and special identification features** so that passengers can easily identify them.
- The scheme also provides for **integration of e-autos with the public transport network**.
- **Electric vehicle charging facilities are already available in the parking areas of 70 Delhi Metro stations**, which will support the operation of these e-autos.

OneSCD

News: India co-hosted the launch of OneSCD on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 81) in New York.

About OneSCD

- **OneSCD is a Global Partnership to advance equity and transform Sickle Cell Care.**
- It is a **multistakeholder and multisectoral global partnership** established to coordinate existing efforts and support country-led action on [Sickle Cell Disease \(SCD\)](#).
- **Hosted by:** It has been launched at high level event held during the **81st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA81)**.
 - It is **hosted by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and co-hosted by India**.
 - The initiative brought together partners **including the Government of Nigeria, WHO, UNICEF, Africa CDC, the World Coalition on Sickle Cell Disease and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**.
- **Key Features**
 - It will **bring together government leaders, UN agencies, health experts, civil society, and people with lived experience**.
 - The Partnership **aims to:**
 - **Build global consensus and standardized targets** for SCD and strengthen political commitment.
 - **Support countries in integrating SCD into national health systems**, including primary healthcare, Universal Health Coverage, NCD and maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health strategies.

- **Mobilize sustainable financing and partnerships** to expand newborn screening, diagnosis, essential medicines, safe blood supplies, patient registries, health information systems, and comprehensive lifelong SCD care.

About Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)

- **Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)** is a group of **inherited red blood cell** disorders affecting **haemoglobin**.
 - **Normal Cells are of Disc-shaped and flexible**, allowing easy movement through blood vessels.
 - In Sickle Cell Disease, **Red blood cells become crescent or “sickle” shaped**, causing them to be rigid and block blood flow.
 - **Blocked blood flow can lead to serious issues** such as Stroke, Eye problems, Infections, Pain crises.
- India has adopted a **comprehensive approach to Sickle Cell Disease** through the **National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission**.
 - It was **launched in 2023** with the goal of eliminating Sickle Cell Disease as a **public health problem by 2047**.

Gulbarga Tur Dal and Tur Dal cultivation in India (Pigeon Pea)

News: APEDA flagged off 1 MT of GI-tagged Gulbarga Tur Dal from Karnataka to the Maldives, helping expand India's agricultural exports.

About Gulbarga Tur Dal (Pigeon Pea)

- **Gulbarga Tur Dal** is associated with the **Kalaburagi region of Karnataka**.
- **Features:**
 - The **high calcium and potassium content of the soil** in Gulbarga tur dal-growing **region** has been one of the major factors for its **superior quality**.
 - It is recognized for its **distinctive taste, aroma and quality**.
 - It also takes **less time to cook**.
- **Recognition:** It has received the **Geographical Indication (GI) registration in 2019**.
- **Production:** **Karnataka** is one of **India's major agricultural states with pulses** playing an important role in its dryland agriculture and rural economy.

- **Kalaburagi is one of the major centres of tur cultivation** and production in Karnataka.

About Tur Dal (Pigeon Pea) Cultivation in India

- **Tur dal is the major legume crop.**
 - It is also known as **pigeon pea or Arhar dal.**
- It is the **second most important pulse after gram.**
- **Geographical condition requirements :**
 - **Climate:** It is mainly grown in **tropical regions**, particularly in the **semi-arid areas of India.**
 - **Rainfall:** It requires **about 600–650 mm of annual rainfall.**
 - It needs **moist conditions during the first eight weeks** and relatively dry conditions during flowering and pod development.
 - **Temperature:** It grows well at **26–30°C during the rainy season and 17–22°C during the post-rainy season (November–March).**
 - **Soil:** It grows well in **black cotton soils** because these **soils retain moisture**, which benefits the crop during dry spells.
 - It can also thrive in **loamy and well-drained alluvial soils.**
 - **Sunlight:** It **needs good sunlight** during pod development.
 - Low sunlight during the monsoon or cloudy weather can lead to poor pod formation.
 - **Intercropping:** It is commonly **grown as an intercrop** with many other crops.
- **Major Diseases:** The major diseases affecting pigeonpea are **wilt, sterility mosaic disease, Phytophthora blight, Alternaria blight, and powdery mildew.**
- **Production area:** **Uttar Pradesh is the leading producer of it in India**, producing about 0.47 million tonnes from 0.49 million hectares.
 - Other producers are **Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.**
- **Exporter:** **Mozambique is an important exporter of pigeonpea (Tur/Arhar) to India.**
- **Nutritional value:**
 - It is **rich in protein and carbohydrates** and provides **important minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and iron.**
 - It is **low in fat and provides good energy**, making it a nutritious part of a balanced diet.

- **Note:** Recently, in a major scientific breakthrough **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** has developed **India's first fully annotated telomere-to-telomere (T2T) reference genome of pigeonpea (*Cajanus cajan* L. Millsp.) variety 'Asha'.**

Exercise VARUNA 2026

News: INS Trishul has arrived at Toulon, France, to participate in the 24th edition of the bilateral maritime exercise VARUNA.

About Exercise VARUNA 2026

- **Exercise VARUNA 2026** is a **bilateral maritime exercise** between the **Indian Navy and the French Navy**.
- **2026 Edition:** The **2026 edition is the 24th edition** of the exercise.
 - The 2026 edition is hosted by **France at Toulon Naval Base**.
- **Origin:** While the **bilateral exercise** between the two navies were **initiated in 1993**, it was **christened as 'VARUNA' in 2001** and has become a hallmark of **India – France strategic bilateral relationship**.
- **Objective:** The exercise **aims to improve coordination, enhance interoperability, share experiences and best practices**, and foster greater mutual understanding between the two Navies.
- **Key Features of Exercise VARUNA 2026:**
 - **Two Phases:** The exercise includes **professional engagements in harbour and at sea, allowing both Navies to undertake different activities**.
 - **Harbour Phase:** It includes **cross-deck visits, operational interactions and sporting engagements between the two Navies**.
 - **Sea Phase:** The exercise involves **professional engagements at sea to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the two Navies**.
 - **Experience Sharing:** The activities provide opportunities to **share experiences and best practices and enhance interoperability**.
 - **Mutual Understanding:** The engagements help **foster greater mutual understanding between the Indian Navy and the French Navy**.
- **Other India-France Military Exercises:**
 - **FRINJEX:** It is a **joint Army exercise**.

- **GARUDA:** It is a **bilateral Air Force exercise**.

Rangeet River

News: Sikkim will host a three-day river festival on the Rangeet River to promote sustainable angling, river conservation, tourism and community participation.

About Rangeet River

- The **Rangeet, or Rangit River** is the **largest river in Sikkim**.
- **Origin:** It originates from a **glacier of Mount Kabru in the lower Kanchenjunga region**.
- **Course:** It begins its **course in the West Sikkim** district and flows **past Pelling, Legship and Jorethang before joining the Teesta**.
- **Boundary:** During its final flow, the Rangeet forms the **boundary between Sikkim and Darjeeling district of West Bengal**.
- **Tributary of:** The river joins the **Teesta River at Teesta Bazaar**, on the periphery of **West Bengal and Sikkim**.
- **Terrain:** Its banks have thick **forest cover**, while some areas are **used for terrace farming**.
- **Ecological Importance:** Its mountain river **system supports cold-water fisheries**, provides irrigation and freshwater.
- **Hydropower Projects:** It supplies water for small hydropower projects.
 - **The Rangeet Dam** has been **built on the Rangeet River**.
 - It started **operating in year 2000**.
 - It **has a 60 MW capacity**.
 - It is a **45-metre-high concrete gravity structure** with a length of 100 metres.

Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project and Subansiri River

News: The Expert Appraisal Committee recommended environmental clearance for SUHEP, subject to Stage-1 forest clearance and concerns over tree felling.

About Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project (SUHEP)

- SUHEP is a **run-of-the-river hydropower project** planned on the **Subansiri River basin**.
- **Location:** The project is planned near **Menga, 20 km from Daporijo in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Subansiri district**.
- **Objectives:** **Power generation and flood moderation** are the stated objectives.

- **Developer:** National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (NHPC)
- **Key Features:**
 - **Capacity:** The project has a **planned capacity of 1,605 MW**.
 - **Dam:** It envisages a **237-metre-high storage dam** from the deepest foundation level of the Subansiri River.
 - **Reservoir:** The reservoir will have a **surface area of 22.2 sq km** and a **length of around 50 km at full reservoir level**.

About Subansiri River

- **Origin:** The **Subansiri River** originates in the **Tibetan Plateau** from the **confluence of – Lokong Chu, Chayal Chu and Tsari Chu rivers**.
- **Type:** It is a **trans-Himalayan** and **antecedent river** that existed **before the rise of the Himalayas** and continued its course through the mountains.
- **Course:** It flows through **Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh before entering Assam**.
 - In Assam, it passes near **Majuli** and merges with the **Brahmaputra River at Jamurighat**.
 - **Tributary of:** It is a **right-bank tributary** of the **Brahmaputra River**
- **Length:** Its total length is approximately **442 km**.
- **Major Tributaries:** Its major tributaries **include Laro, Nye, Yume, Tsari, Kamla, Jiyadhol, Ranganadi and Dikrong**.

Teqball

News: Teqball made its debut at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, with India coming close to winning medals in women's singles and mixed doubles..

About Teqball

- **Teqball** is a **hybrid of football and table tennis**.
- It is played with a **football on a curved table**.
- **Origin:** It was **invented in Budapest, Hungary, in 2012**.
 - It was developed by **former professional footballer Gábor Borsányi**, entrepreneur **György Gattyán**, and computer scientist **Viktor Huszár**.
- **Global Governing Body:** The **Fédération Internationale de Teqball (FITEQ)** is the **global body** that **organises Global Series and World Championships**.

- **Key Features:**

- **Participants:** Teqball can be **played in singles** between two players or **doubles between two teams** of two players.
- **Equipment:** It uses a **size-5 football** filled to lower pressure and a **curved table with a rigid net**.
- **Format:** Matches are **played in best-of-three sets**, with **12 points needed to win a set**.
- **Touches:** Players **cannot use their arms or hands** and get a **maximum of three touches before returning the ball**.
- **Doubles:** In doubles, **the ball must be passed to a teammate at least once** before being played towards the opponent.
- **Table:** Players **cannot touch the table during play**, reducing the chances of injury through contact.

Status of Teqball in India

- **Federation:** **Teqball India** was **formed in 2019** and is **based in Mumbai**.
 - It is **affiliated with FITEQ**.
- **Recognition:** The sport is **awaiting recognition from India's Sports Ministry and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)**.
- **Players:** India currently has around 180–200 registered players.
- **International Performance**
 - At the **2024 World Championships in Vietnam**, **Mohamed Anas Baig and Declan Gonsalves** won **bronze in men's doubles**.
 - **Asian Games 2026:** India fielded a **three-member** squad in **women's singles, men's doubles and mixed doubles**.
 - **Quimcy Dsouza** competed in **women's singles**, while **Mohamed Anas Baig and Declan Gonsalves** competed in **men's doubles**.
 - **Dsouza and Baig** also represented India in **mixed doubles**.
 - **India narrowly missed bronze in women's singles and mixed doubles**.

Digital Connectivity Rating (DCR) Platform

News: TRAI has launched the Digital Connectivity Rating (DCR) Platform to make property connectivity ratings visible and verifiable to consumers. About

About Digital Connectivity Rating (DCR) Platform



Source – ZEE Business

- **Digital Connectivity Rating (DCR) Platform** is an **integrated digital platform** that enables consumers to view the digital connectivity ratings of residential, commercial, and government properties.
- **Launched By:** The platform was launched by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (**TRAI**).
- **Legal Backing:** It implements the **TRAI (Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity) Regulations, 2024**, as amended in 2026, and follows the **Rating Manual 2026**.
- **Aim:** It aims to provide **consumers with credible and comparable connectivity information** to support informed property purchase or lease decisions.
- **Key Features**
 - **Integrated Workflow:** The platform **brings Property Managers, registered DCRA's, and consumers onto a common digital interface** and **supports the complete rating process**.
 - **Digital Assessment:** Registered Digital Connectivity Rating Agency (DCRA) **can assess properties, record test results, manage documents, generate reports, and complete the rating process**.

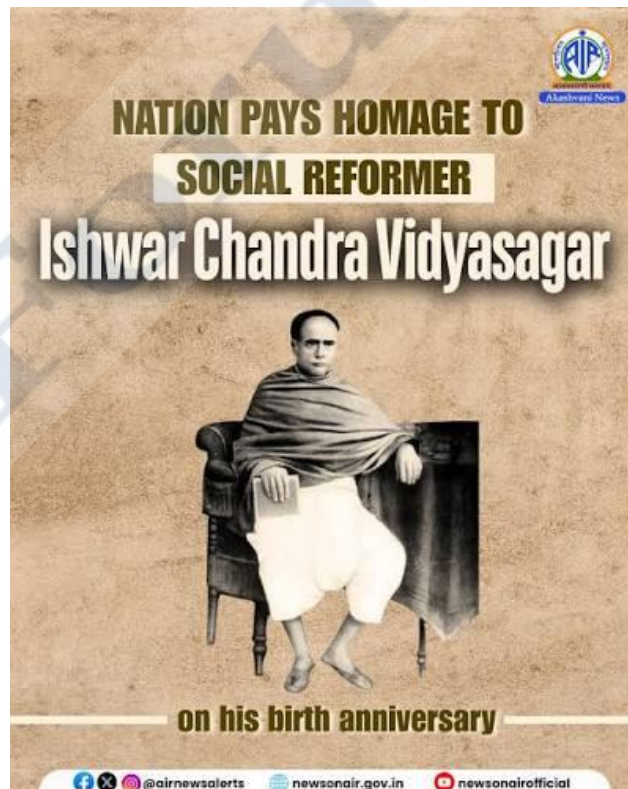
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- **Mobile Connectivity Testing:** A dedicated mobile app enables authorised DCRA to conduct in-building digital connectivity measurements according to the prescribed methodology.
- **Consumer Access:** Consumers can search rated properties by name, certificate ID, or location, view ratings, and verify digitally signed certificates through QR codes.
- **Digital Connectivity Rating Agency (DCRA)**
 - A DCRA is a registered agency authorised to assess and rate the digital connectivity of properties under the DCR framework.
 - **Registration:** Eligible entities intending to work as DCRA are registered by TRAI through the DCR Platform.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

News: The nation is paying homage on September 26 to Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar on his 207th birth anniversary.

About Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar



Source: News On Air

- **Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar** was an Indian educator and social reformer considered the father of Bengali prose.
- He was born on **26 September 1820 at Birsingha in Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal.**
 - He was born into a poor Brahmin family.
 - His real name was **Iswarchandra Bandopadhyay.**
 - He had displayed an exceptional thirst for knowledge from an early age.
- **Later years:** He spent over **12 years at Sanskrit College in Calcutta**, where he studied Sanskrit grammar, literature, Vedanta philosophy, logic, astronomy and Hindu law.
 - In recognition of his remarkable scholarship, he was bestowed with the title "**Vidyasagar**," meaning "**Ocean of Learning**," at the young age of 21.
- He studied **English literature and philosophy** and was appointed **principal of Sanskrit College on January 22, 1851.**
- He was also the **first Secretary of Bethune School.**
- **Contribution:**
 - **Education:** Through his celebrated book **Borno Porichoy (Introduction to the Letters)**, he **simplified the Bengali language** and made it accessible to ordinary people.
 - His most enduring contributions were as an **educationist and social reformer**, particularly in **challenging the traditional practices of upper-caste Hindu society.**
 - **Women remained at the centre** of his reform efforts.
 - **Child marriage:** He devoted much of his life to opposing **child marriage** and advocating **widow remarriage.**
 - In a paper written in 1850, he launched a **strong critique of the practice of marrying girls at the age of 10** or even younger.
 - He highlighted the **social, ethical and health-related problems associated with the practice and questioned the validity of the Dharma Shastras** that supported it.
 - He also drew upon **scriptures and ancient commentaries** to **argue in favour of widow remarriage**, asserting that the "**sastras explicitly sanction their remarriage.**"

- **Widow remarriage:** In 1855, Vidyasagar published two influential tracts on the **Marriage of Hindu Widows**.
 - On October 14, 1855, he submitted a **petition to the Government of India**, urging it to consider **passing a law to remove the obstacles to the remarriage of Hindu widows** and to recognize the children born from such marriages as legitimate.
 - On July 16, 1856, the **Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, also known as Act XV**, was passed.
- **Polygamy:** He also campaigned **against polygamy**.
 - In 1857, a petition with **25,000 signatures** sought to prohibit polygamy among Kulin Brahmins.
 - A second petition, backed by **21,000 signatures**, followed in 1866.
 - In the 1870s, Vidyasagar argued that polygamy, lacking scriptural sanction, should be **prohibited by law**.
- He played a significant role in **establishing several educational institutions**, including the **Metropolitan Institution (now Vidyasagar College) in 1872**.
 - He also set up **20 model schools** across **Kolkata, Midnapore, Burdwan and Nadia**, providing quality education to students irrespective of their social background.
- **Notable work:** Among his works are **Borno Porichoy (1855), Betal Panchabinsati (1847), Sitar Bonobas (1860) and Shakuntala (1854)**.
 - **Other notable work:** Vidyasagar's literary and social reform writings include **Banglar Itihaas (1848), Jivancharita (1849), Mahabharata (1860), Seetar Vanavas (1860), Bhrantivilaas (1869), Oti Alpa Hoilo (1873), Aabaar Oti Alpa Hoilo (1873), Brajavilaas (1884), and Ratnopariksha (1886)**.
 - His important works on social reform include **Bidhobabivah (1855)**, advocating widow remarriage; **Bahubivah (1871)**, opposing polygamy; and **Balyabivah**, which criticised child marriage.
- He passed away on **29 July 1891**, leaving behind a lasting legacy of **knowledge, compassion, education, and social reform** in the service of nation-building.

India's First Port-based e-Methanol Plant

News: The foundation stone was laid for India's first port-based e-methanol production facility at Deendayal Port Authority in Kandla, Gujarat.

About India's First Port-based e-Methanol Plant



Source – DD India

- **Location:** India's First Port-based e-Methanol Plant will be established at Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla, Gujarat.
- **Initiative By:** The project is a joint initiative of Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) and Assam Petro-Chemicals Ltd (APCL).
- **Funding:** The project involves a total investment of ₹2,300 crore, with DPA and APCL contributing in a 76:24 ratio.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Two Phases:** The first phase will add 50 tonnes per day at ₹1,200 crore, while the second will add 100 tonnes per day at ₹1,100 crore.
 - **Green Fuel Supply:** The e-methanol will support vessels operating on the Asia-Europe International Trade Corridor.
 - **Green-Fuel Ecosystem:** The project will support transportation, storage and supply infrastructure around Kandla.
 - **Production Cost:** Green methanol is expected to cost about US\$750 per tonne, compared with a global rate of about US\$1,300.

About e-Methanol

- **Methanol** is a **chemical compound** used as a **fuel and in industrial applications**.
- **E-methanol** is a low-carbon form of **methanol** produced using **renewable energy and captured or recycled CO₂**.
- **Process of Production:**
 - **Green Hydrogen Generation:** Renewable electricity is used to **split water (H₂O)** into **hydrogen and oxygen through electrolysis**.
 - **CO₂ Capture:** CO₂ is captured from industrial sources or directly from the air and used as an **input for production**.
 - **Methanol Synthesis:** Green hydrogen and captured CO₂ are combined in a catalytic reactor under pressure to produce methanol with minimal by-products.
- **Applications:** E-methanol can be used as a **low-carbon fuel in shipping and in heavy industry and chemical manufacturing**.

Cool Leaders Awards

News: The inaugural Cool Leaders Awards were launched at the Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026 in Singapore to recognise leadership in sustainable cooling.

About Cool Leaders Awards



Source – UNEP

- The **Cool Leaders Awards** is a **global recognition initiative** that **honours outstanding leadership** in **sustainable cooling and heat resilience**.
- **Launched By:** It was launched by the **UNEP Cool Coalition**.
 - It was **introduced at the Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026 in Singapore**.
- **2026 Cool Leaders Award**
 - **Singapore:** It was recognised for leadership in **passive cooling and heat resilience**.
 - **United Arab Emirates:** It was recognised for leadership in **district cooling and advancing cooling in global climate and development policy**.
 - **Dong Mingzhu:** The **Chairwoman of Gree Electric Appliances** was recognised for **spearheading the development of ultra-efficient, low-carbon cooling technologies**, including the **Zero Carbon Source air-conditioning system**.

UNEP Cool Coalition

- It is a global platform for sustainable cooling.
- **Launched in :** It was launched in 2019 as a flagship initiative of the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Network:** It brings together over 250 actors, including governments, businesses, cities and financial institutions, to promote efficient and climate-friendly cooling.

Global Cooling Pledge

- It is the world's first collective global commitment to reduce the climate impact of cooling.
- **Launched At:** It was launched at COP28 in 2023.
- **Emission and Efficiency Targets:** It aims to reduce cooling-related emissions by at least 68% below 2022 levels by 2050 and increase the efficiency of new air-conditioners by 50% by 2030.
- The Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026 announced a package of new measures to accelerate action on sustainable cooling and heat resilience.
 - **Cool Leaders Awards:** It recognizes outstanding leadership in sustainable cooling and heat resilience.
 - **Global Roadmap on Heat Resilience:** It provides a framework to help countries build resilience to extreme heat and protect essential services.
 - **Nature for Cooling Challenge:** It supports the use of nature-based solutions, such as urban forests, parks and green roofs, to tackle extreme heat.
 - **Manufacturing Platform:** It brings together governments and manufacturers to increase the availability of efficient cooling equipment and promote low- and ultra-low-GWP refrigerants.

WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 and India's Position

News: Team India secured 10th position at the 48th WorldSkills Competition in Shanghai 2026, winning 6 Silver Medals and 20 Medal for Excellence.

About WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 and India's Position



Source – MoSD

- The **WorldSkills Competition** is the world's **biggest international skills competition**, bringing together **young people, industry, education and government leaders** from around the world to **advance Technical and Vocational Education and Training**.
- **Frequency:** It is held **every two years**.
- **2026 Host:** It is hosted in **Shanghai, China**.
 - It was held from **23 to 25 September** at the **National Exhibition and Convention Center, Shanghai**.
- **Skills range:** It ranges from **Robotics, Cloud Computing, and Cybersecurity** to **Aircraft Maintenance, Cooking, and Welding**.
- **India's Participation in 2026 edition:**
 - India's participation at WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 was coordinated by the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** under the aegis of the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**.

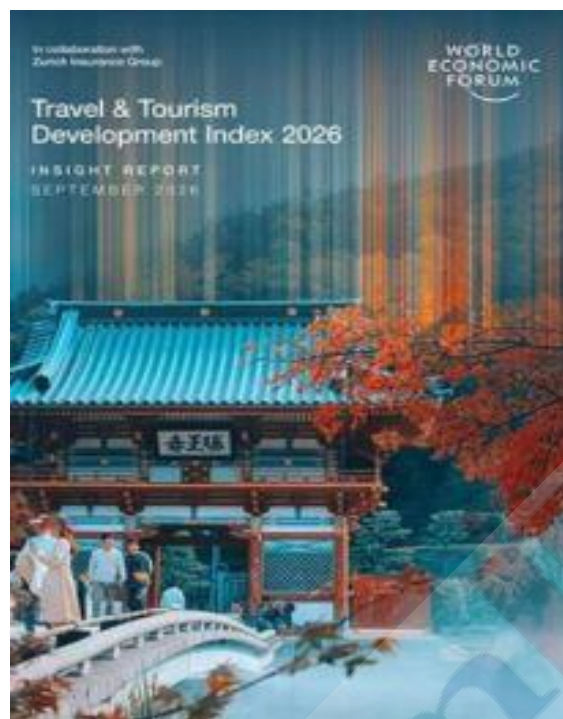
Factly Compilation [Fourth Week] September 2026

- It is supported from **Sector Skill Councils, industry partners, training institutions, technical experts** and other stakeholders.
- India is represented by its **largest-ever contingent of 70 competitors**, showcasing their talent and skills across **63 different disciplines**.
- This year, India debuted in **11 new and emerging skill categories**, including Dental Prosthetics, Digital Interactive Media Design, Intelligent Security Technology, Landscape Gardening, Optoelectronic Technology, Retail Sales, Unmanned Aerial Systems, Industrial Mechanics, Software Testing, Heavy Vehicle Technology and Aircraft Maintenance.
- **Position:** Team India secured **10th position at the 48th WorldSkills Competition, Shanghai 2026**.
- **Medals:** They won **6 Silver Medals and 20 Medal for Excellence**.
- **Winners of silver medals are:**
 - **Smriti Nambiar** in **Bakery**;
 - **Mohammed Salam** in **Dental Prosthetics**;
 - **Kovid Ajay Gangrade** in **Digital Interactive Media Design**;
 - **Parth Vohra** in **Industrial Design Technology**;
 - **Mehrunissa Begum** in **Logistics and Freight Forwarding**; and
 - **Saniya Joshi** in **Retail Sales**.
- India also secured **20 Medal for Excellence across technical, industrial, digital, creative and service skills**.
 - **Smriti Nambiar, Silver Medallist in Bakery**, was recognised as **Best of Nation for India**.

Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2026

News: The World Economic Forum released the Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2026, with India improving to 31st position from 39th in 2024.

About Travel & Tourism Development Index 2026



Source – WEF

- **Travel & Tourism Development Index** assesses the **conditions that support sustainable and resilient tourism development**.
- **Published by:** It is published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
 - The **2026** edition is published by WEF in collaboration with Zurich Insurance Group.
- **Frequency:** The index is published **biennially**.
- **Origin:** The index was **first launched in 2007 as the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI)**.
 - It was **relaunched in its current form in 2022**, with a broader focus on sustainable and resilient tourism development.
- **Economies Assessed:** The 2026 edition assessed **110 economies**.
- **Objective:** It provides comparable evidence to **help governments, businesses and destination leaders identify conditions and policies** that can help tourism grow sustainably, withstand disruption and support national development.
- **Key Highlights of Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2026**
- **Global Context:**

- **Tourism Recovery:** International tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion in 2025, 4.4% above pre-pandemic levels.
- **Improved Performance:** 101 of 110 economies improved their scores between 2024 and 2026, while the average score rose 2.1%.
- **Top Ranking :** Japan moved up two places to first, followed by the US, Spain, Australia and France.
- **Employment:** Travel and tourism supported more than 366 million jobs in 2025, about one in every 10 jobs globally.
- **India's Performance**
 - **India's Rank:** India rose to 31st from 39th in 2024, supported by its low travel costs, cultural resources and natural attractions.
 - **Cultural Resources:** India is among the top 10 economies for World Heritage cultural sites, along with China and Mexico.
 - **Areas for Improvement:** Workforce skills, environmental sustainability and tourism infrastructure remain areas requiring improvement.
 - **Economic Contribution:** India, along with nine other large non-high-income tourism economies, collectively accounts for more than 28% of global direct travel and tourism GDP.

Rakhine State of Myanmar

News: A Myanmar military air strike near a market in rebel-held Rakhine State killed at least 49 people and injured 58 others.

About Rakhine State of Myanmar



Source – Al Jazeera

- **Location:** It is located in **southwestern Myanmar**.
- **Bordered by:** It is **bordered by Chin State to the north**, other **Myanmar regions to the east**, the **Bay of Bengal to the west**, and **Bangladesh to the northwest**.
- **Capital:** Sittwe is the **capital of Rakhine State**, formerly known as Akyab.
- **Geographical Features:**
 - **Extent:** Rakhine State stretches from the **Naf estuary in the north** to the **Gwa River in the south**.
 - **Arakan Yoma:** The **Arakan Yoma** forms its *eastern boundary* and **partly separates it from southern Myanmar**.
 - **Coast and islands:** It has a **long, narrow coastline** along the **Bay of Bengal**, with offshore islands such as **Cheduba and Ramree**.
 - **Rivers:** Its principal rivers include the **Naf estuary, Mayu, Kaladan and Lemro** rivers.

New Extradition Portal and PRAHAAR initiative

News: The Ministry of Home Affairs unveiled PRAHAAR and a new extradition portal to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts and bring fugitives back to India.

About New Extradition Portal



Source – PIB

- **New Extradition Portal** is intended to bring together and streamline efforts to secure the return of fugitives from abroad.
- **Launched by:** The **Ministry of Home Affairs** launched the new extradition portal.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Unified Platform:** The portal brings together key bodies—the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**, **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**, and **state law enforcement agencies**—to track and manage extradition requests smoothly once a fugitive is detained abroad.
 - **Inter-Agency Synergy:** It eliminates **communication gaps**, ensuring **zero delay** when transmitting court-approved extradition requests to foreign nations.
 - **Institutional participation:** Senior **officials from central and state police organisations** participated in discussions on extradition and counter-terrorism.

About PRAHAAR Initiative

- **PRAHAAR** is India's first comprehensive **National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy**.
- **Launched by:** The **Ministry of Home Affairs** launched PRAHAAR in February 2026.
- **Aim:** It provides a **proactive, intelligence-led framework to prevent and respond to terrorist activities and radicalisation through whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches**.
- **Seven Pillars of PRAHAAR:**

● Prevention	● Using intelligence-led, proactive measures to stop attacks before they occur.
● Responses	● Swift, proportionate, and graded responses coordinated across central and state levels.
● Aggregating Capacities	● A “whole-of-government” approach to modernize forces with advanced tools and weaponry.
● Human Rights	● Ensuring operations are grounded in the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights.
● Attenuating Conditions	● Addressing radicalization and socio-economic vulnerabilities through education and engagement.
● Aligning Efforts	● Strengthening international cooperation via treaties, extradition, and UN-led norms.
● Recovery & Resilience	● A “whole-of-society” approach involving NGOs and community leaders for rehabilitation.

● **Key Features:**

- **Zero tolerance:** The strategy follows a zero-tolerance approach towards terrorism and violence.
- **Proactive doctrine:** PRAHAAR shifts India from a reactive security stance to a proactive doctrine.
- **Real-time intelligence sharing:** PRAHAAR formalises real-time intelligence sharing through the **Multi Agency Centre (MAC)**.
 - It also promotes a swift and coordinated chain of command between State agencies/police and specialised central forces such as the NSG.

- **Technology and security:** It integrates advanced technology and focuses on securing critical infrastructure.
- **Continuous strengthening:** The strategy emphasises continuous analysis of terror incidents, result-oriented action and regular review through the Annual Anti-Terror Conference.

Indrayani River

News: As part of the Seva Sankalp initiative, the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) organised a stakeholder consultation on Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and emergency preparedness at Lonavala and Bhushi Dams.

About Indrayani River



Source: Research gate

- **Indrayani River** is a rain-fed river through Maharashtra.
- **Origin:** It originates at Kurvande village near Lonavala, in the North Western Ghats and flows towards east to meet [Bhima River](#) near Tulapur, Pune.
- **Length:** It covers a total distance of 105.3 km.
- **Tributary of:** It is a tributary of the Bhima River.
- **Associated Pilgrimage sites:** It flows through two pilgrimage centres namely Dehu and Alandi, so it is respected as a sacred river which related with great Saints such as [Saint Tukaram Maharaj](#) and Dnyaneshwar Maharaj.
- It also passes through the industrial town of Pimpri-Chinchwad.

- **Associated Dam:** Valvan dam, Lonavala and Bhushi Dam are situated on the river and its tributaries.

About Lonavala Dam and Bhushi Dam

- **Lonavala Dam and Bhushi Dam** both are situated within the **Indrayani River system**.
- They were constructed in **late 1860s for the Great Indian Peninsular Railway** as a wellspring of water for their steam motors.
 - Water from the dam was **conveyed to Lonavala, Khandala and the switching station of the railroads by cast-press funnels**.
- Bhushi Dam collects water from the **Indrayani River and its tributaries** and releases it through a series of steps that create a waterfall-like effect.

United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

News: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal on Monday addressed the 15th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

About United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice



Source – NOA

- **United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** is the **world's largest and most diverse gathering of** policy-makers, practitioners, academia, intergovernmental organizations and civil society in the **field of crime prevention and criminal justice**.
- **Organized by:** It is organized by the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](https://www.unodc.org/).

- The Congresses have been **held every five years since 1955** in **different parts of the world**.
- The Congresses provide a forum for
 - the **exchange of views between States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individual experts** representing various professions and disciplines;
 - the **exchange of experiences in research, law and policy development**; and
 - the **identification of emerging trends and issues** in crime prevention and criminal justice.

About 15th Crime Congress



United Nations
Office on Drugs and Crime



Source: UNODC

- The **15th Crime Congress** is being held in **Abu Dhabi 26 September to 1 October 2026**.
- Its theme is “**Accelerating crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: protecting people and planet and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the digital age**”.
- The congress opened with the adoption of the **Abu Dhabi Declaration**, a framework **aimed at boosting international cooperation against digital tech exploitation** and fast-evolving transnational crimes.

PRAMAAN Certificates under the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme

News: The first PRAMAAN certificates were handed over under the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS) in New Delhi.

About PRAMAAN Certificates



Source – ToI

- **PRAMAAN** stands for **Programme for Recognition and Accreditation of Sustainable Management Practices for Agroforestry and Natural Forestry Resources**.
 - It is a **nationally accepted, credible and transparent framework** for **certification of forests, wood and non-timber forest products**.
- **Operating Agency:** Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal
- **Accreditation Body:** Certification bodies are accredited by the **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)** under the **Quality Council of India**.
- **First Certificates:** The certificates were given to **Andhra Pradesh Forest Development Corporation (APFDC)** and a **farmer associated with the Odisha Bamboo Development Agency (OBDA)**.
 - These certificates are given under the **Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme**.
- **Key Features**
 - **Independent Certification:** Certification is based on **independent third-party audits** rather than self-declaration alone.

- **Standards:** Forest Management certification follows the **Indian Forest Management Standards under the National Working Plan Code (NWPC) 2023.**
- **Market Linkages:** PRAMAAN promotes domestic and international market linkages for certified forests and agroforestry products.
- **International Recognition:** Its accreditation architecture is **benchmarked against international certification frameworks** for recognition among global buyers and regulators.
- **Inclusive Approach:** The scheme brings **farmers, rural and tribal communities, and forest-dependent communities** into a structured certification system.

About Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme

Specification	Details
Purpose	● This national certification scheme promotes sustainable forest management and agroforestry in India through voluntary third-party certification.
Supervised by	● Indian Forest and Wood Certification Council (Act as a multi-stakeholder advisory body)
Implementing agency	● Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal (Responsible for overall management of the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme.)
Key features of the scheme	● Market incentives – This Scheme offers market incentives to various entities such as state forest departments, individual farmers, FPOs, and wood-based industries, that practice responsible forest management and agroforestry. ● The scheme comprises forest management certification, tree outside forest management certification, and chain of custody certification. ● A distinct Trees Outside Forests Standard is introduced in the newly launched Indian Forest & Wood Certification Scheme.

FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO 28)

News: India highlighted its forest and landscape restoration initiatives at the 28th Session of COFO in Rome.

About FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO)



Source – NOA

Aspect	Details
About	Committee on Forestry (COFO) is Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s highest global intergovernmental body on forestry.
Establishment	It was established by the FAO Conference at its 16th Session in 1971.
Frequency	It meets once every two years and may hold additional sessions when necessary.
Members	- COFO has 128 Members. - It is open to FAO Members that notify their intention to participate.
Reporting structure	- It reports to the FAO Council on programme and budget matters and - to the FAO Conference on policy and regulatory matters.

Working structure	● Six Regional Forestry Commissions support regional dialogue, ● While the Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agro-silvo-pastoral Systems supports work on dryland ecosystems.
Function	● It reviews FAO's forestry programmes and international forestry problems and promotes concerted action by Members and FAO.

About COFO 28

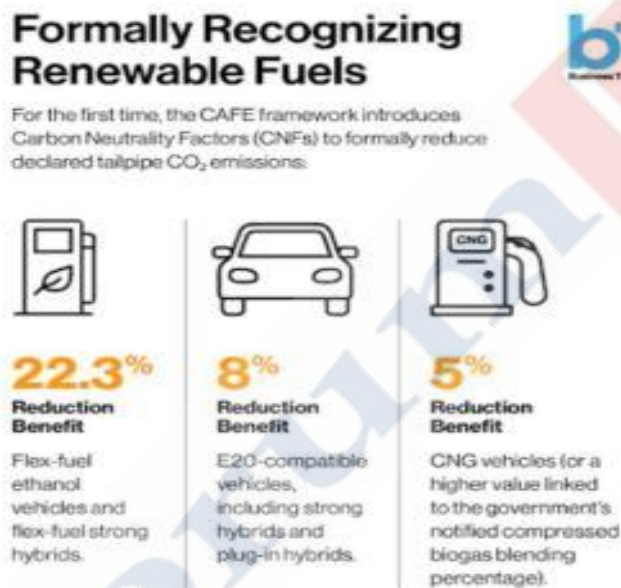
- **Location:** The 28th Session of COFO was held at **FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy**.
- **Organiser:** The session is **organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**.
- **Theme:** The session theme is **"Forests for food, resilience and prosperity."**
- **Concurrent event: 10th World Forest Week**, organised in conjunction with the **COFO session**.
- **Focus Area:** The session focuses on **sustainable forest management, forest and landscape restoration, climate action and resilient forest landscapes**.
- **Key Highlights**
 - **Forest and tree cover:** India's forest and tree cover **stands at 82.74 million hectares, covering 25.17% of its geographical area**.
 - The **FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025** ranks **India 9th globally in forest area and 3rd in net annual forest area gain**.
 - **Carbon sink:** India created an **additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2021**.
 - **Bonn Challenge:** India aims to **restore 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2030**.
 - **Landscape Restoration:** The **Aravalli Green Wall** has identified around 6.45 million hectares for restoration, while **MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes)** focuses on mangrove restoration.
 - **Afforestation Campaign:** Under **Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam-Plant4Mother**, more than 3.5 billion saplings have been planted.

- **International Cooperation:** India called for **country-driven implementation, technology transfer, capacity development and sustainable financing**, especially for developing countries.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE)-III Framework

News: The government notified the final CAFE-III norms on September 29, which will apply to passenger vehicles from April 2027.

About Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE)-III Framework



Source – BT

- **CAFE-III** is a **fleet-wide fuel-efficiency framework** for **passenger vehicles**.
 - It **requires manufacturers** to keep the **average fuel consumption** of eligible vehicles **within prescribed limits**.
- **Aim:** It aims to **improve fuel efficiency** and **reduce CO₂ emissions**, while **promoting cleaner technologies and alternative fuels**.
- **Notified by:** It was notified by the **Ministry of Power**.
- **Organisation Involved:**
 - **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE):** It **maintains the manufacturer passbook**, receives **compliance data** and allows **credit buyout**.

- **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH):** It will enforce testing, calculation, reporting and certification-related provisions.
- **Origin:** CAFE norms were first notified in 2017 under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
 - CAFE-III was first proposed in 2024.
- **Applicability:** CAFE-III applies to M1 category passenger vehicles manufactured or imported for sale in India.
 - It covers petrol, diesel, LPG, CNG, hybrid, and electric passenger vehicles with a gross weight under 3,500 kg.
- **Different Phases of CAFE Norms:**

Phase	Duration	Key Feature
CAFE-I	2017-18 to 2021-22	● The first phase introduced fleet-level fuel-efficiency standards with a CO₂ limit of 130 g/km.
CAFE-II	2022-23 to 2026-27	● The second phase tightened the standard to a CO₂ limit of 113 g/km.
CAFE-III	2027-28 to 2031-32	● The third phase introduces weight-based fuel-consumption targets, credit trading, cleaner-vehicle benefits and technology credits.

- **Key Features of CAFE-III**
 - **Progressive targets:** Annual fuel-consumption targets **become stricter and decline progressively** between FY 2027-28 and FY 2031-32.
 - **Credit and debit system:** Manufacturers **earn credits** when actual consumption is below the target and **accumulate debits** when it exceeds the target.
 - **Credit trading:** Manufacturers **can pool or trade credits** with other manufacturers or buy them from the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** to offset deficits.
 - **Cleaner vehicles:** Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Range-Extended Electric Vehicles (REEVs) **receive a 3.0 volume factor**, meaning each such vehicle is counted as three vehicles for the fleet calculation.

- **Alternative fuels:** Carbon Neutrality Factors (CNFs) provide a **benefit by discounting declared tailpipe CO₂ emissions.**
- **Technology credits:** Manufacturers **can claim 1 g CO₂/km** for each specified fuel-saving technology, subject to an **overall limit of 9 g CO₂/km.**
- **Small manufacturers:** Manufacturers with **fewer than 1,000 eligible vehicles are exempt** from the specific CAFE target but must still report their fuel consumption.

About Bharat Stage (BS) Norms

- **Bharat Stage (BS) emission standards regulate the output of air pollutants** from **internal combustion and spark-ignition engines**, including motor vehicles.
- **Established by:** These standards are established by the **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** under the **Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.**
- **Based on:** The BS regulations are **based on European emission standards.**
- **Key Difference between CAFE and BS-VI:** CAFE primarily **targets CO₂ emissions**, while **BS-VI addresses overall emissions**, including **Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and Sulphur Oxides (SOx).**

India's new Sites in UNESCO Tentative List – Bagh Cave Paintings and Group of Temples of the Chambal Valley

News: India's UNESCO Tentative List now has 78 sites, with 5 additions including Bagh Cave Paintings, Group of Temples of the Chambal Valley among others.

About Bagh Cave Paintings



Source – India Tales

- The **Bagh caves** are located on the **southern slope of the Vindhyan range** in **western Madhya Pradesh**.
- They are situated on the banks of the **Baghani River**.
- These are **not natural** but were carved over a period of time during the **Satavahana period**.
- **Features:**
 - They consist of **nine rock-cut Buddhist caves**.
 - They were **excavated on a perpendicular sandstone rock face of a hill** across the seasonal stream of Baghani.
 - These rock-cut Buddhist monasteries are **renowned for their stunning mural paintings**, which illustrate the Jataka tales.
 - The **earthy reds, yellows, and greens of the murals** offer a **rare** glimpse into the **spiritual and artistic traditions of ancient Buddhism**.
 - Out of the original **nine** caves, **only five** have **survived**, all of which are **viharas or resting places for monks**, having a **quadrangular plan**.
 - **Cave 4**, also known as the **Rang Mahal**, is the most important of the five caves that still exist (Palace of Colors).
 - **Tempera** was used to paint the **Viharas of Bagh's** walls and ceilings, **with shards still evident in Caves 3 and 4** (remnants also observed in Caves 2, 5, and 7).
 - **Cave 2** is popularly known as "**Pandava Cave**" and stands as the best-preserved rock-cut monastery in the complex.

About Group of Temples of the Chambal Valley



Source: MP Tourism

- The **Group of Temples of the Chambal Valley** are located in the **Chambal valley region of present-day Morena district in Madhya Pradesh**.
- They include **Bateshwar, Padavali and Kakarmath**.
- These were **built between the 8th and 11th centuries CE**.
- They show the **development of the regional Nagara style of temple architecture** under the **Gurjara-Pratihara and Kachchhapaghata dynasties**, which ruled the region during this period.
- They share similar features, including the use of **sandstone in dry masonry, planned temple layouts, and detailed sculptures** incorporated into the temple structures.
- **About Bateshwar temple:**
 - It was built mostly during the **Gurjara-Pratihara period between the 8th and 10th centuries CE**.
 - It **comprised of more than 200 small shrines arranged across a terraced hillside landscape**.
 - It is **constructed entirely of finely dressed sandstone blocks without mortar**.
 - The shrines **illustrate advanced structural knowledge and modular temple construction techniques**.
 - It demonstrates a **wide typological range of Nagara-style shrines**, from the temple with **simple flat-roof to developed shikhara atop sanctum**.
- **About Padavali Temple Complex:**

- It is associated with the **Kachchhapaghata rulers** and dates back to the **10th century CE**.
- The original **sanctum is no longer present**, but the remaining **mandapa and entrance porch** have **beautifully carved pillars, beams and ceilings**.
- The carvings show **detailed religious themes** and reflect the close connection between **architecture and sculpture** in the [Nagara style](#) of Central India.
- **About Kakarmath temple:**
 - It was constructed in the **early 11th century CE under the Kachchhapaghata ruler Kirtiraj**.
 - It was **built on a high platform and constructed in dry masonry** using precisely interlocked sandstone blocks.
 - It features **a long shikhara and axial plan** comprising a sanctum, vestibule and pillared hall.
- **Chausath Yogini Temple:** Another temple in the region is **Chausath Yogini Temple at Mitaoli**.
 - It is **geographically related to this group, but represents a distinct architectural and ritual tradition**.
 - It is associated with **Yogini cult worship and circular temple design**.
 - It has a **distinct universal value within the broader context of Yogini temple traditions** in India.

India's new Sites in UNESCO Tentative List – Ginnorgarh and Udaigiri Caves

News: Five new sites and serial transnational proposals have been added to India's UNESCO Tentative List, taking the total to 78 sites.

About Ginnorgarh Fort



Source – FPJ

- **Location:** The **Ginnorgarh Fort** is located inside the [Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary](#) in **Madhya Pradesh**.
- **Built by:** It was developed by the **Raj Gond rulers of the Garha Kingdom**.
- It served as the **principal fortified capital of the Raj Gond rulers in central India**.
- **Historical Period:** The fort functioned as a major **political and administrative centre** from the early **16th century until the early 18th century**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Strategic setting:** The fort uses **steep slopes, ravines** and thick **vegetation** as natural defensive features.
 - **Three-tiered layout:** It is **divided** into the **morchha, amghera** and **inner royal core**, reflecting **administrative, military and social hierarchy**.
 - **Fortifications:** The complex has **fortification walls reaching up to 82 feet**, along with bastions and gateways.
 - **Palatial remains:** The ruined **seven-storey Rani Mahal** contains **halls with domical ceilings** and **wall paintings** showing **animals, birds, floral and geometric designs**.
 - **Water management:** The fort had **65 stepwells and four lakes** that collected and stored rainwater for year-round supply.

- **Indigenous technology:** Construction used lime, surkhi, stone, wood, jaggery and Bael pulp, showing adaptation to local climate and terrain.

Udaigiri Caves



Source – Wikipedia

- **Location:** The Udaigiri Caves are located on Udaigiri Hill in Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Built by:** It was developed primarily under Gupta patronage between the late 4th and early 5th centuries CE.
- The site contains 20 excavated caves with shrines, sculptures, inscriptions and circulation paths.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Gupta art:** It preserves an early stage of Hindu sacred architecture and iconography.
 - **Varaha relief:** Cave 5 contains the celebrated monumental Varaha panel, an important example of Gupta sculptural expression.
 - **Religious elements:** The complex contains Shaiva and Jain elements alongside its dominant Gupta-period Brahmanical programme, particularly its Vaishnava imagery and association with kingship.
 - **Integrated sacred landscape:** The caves, sculptures, inscriptions, topography and water-related features together form an integrated ritual landscape in which the natural hill was transformed into a sacred and political setting.