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TNPSC **PRESTORE**

APRIL 2025

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AGRICULTURE***SAVING TRADITIONAL VARIETIES OF SEEDS*****SUBJECT: AGRICULTURE**

- Disappearance of India's traditional seed varieties due to hybrid dominance.
- **Market Demand:** Preference for high-yield rice/wheat over millets, pulses.
- **Conservation:** Lack of community seed banks for traditional varieties.
- **Policy Bias:** Subsidies favor high-yield crops, sidelining biodiversity.
- **Benefits of Traditional Seeds:** Climate-resilient (drought/flood-tolerant).
- Nutrient-rich, sustainable for soil health.
- **Solutions:** Strengthen community seed banks.
- Fund participatory plant breeding (farmers + scientists).
- Market incentives: MSP, include in rations/school meals.
- Consumer awareness for traditional crops

HOW GOVERNMENTALITY EXACERBATES THE PROBLEM OF FARMER'S STUBBLE FARMING**SUBJECT: AGRICULTURE**

- Winter air pollution in Indo-Gangetic plains worsens due to post-harvest stubble burning in Punjab, Haryana, and western UP.
- A recent study by IIT Kanpur and AIRShed (2023) found stubble burning contributes 20–40% of total PM_{2.5} load in north India during October–November
- **Subtle Power Structures**
- Farmers appear to “choose” to burn stubble, but their choices are conditioned by:
- Skewed Minimum Support Price (MSP) system
- Lack of viable market alternatives
- Dependence on middlemen (arthiyas)
- Absence of sustainable waste disposal technologies
- **Policy Distortion & State's Role**

- Government often penalises farmers for pollution but ignores similar or greater emissions from industrial actors.
- This selective governance creates resentment and entrenches mistrust in rural–urban environmental divides.
- **Interviews Conducted**
- Farmers from Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Tarn Taran (Punjab) were interviewed.
- Major issues voiced: Lack of alternatives to burning
- High cost and low effectiveness of decomposers
- Lack of institutional support for crop diversification or waste-based products

ISRO SATELLITES FORECAST WHEAT PRODUCTION ACCESS CROP CONDITION**SUBJECT: AGRICULTURE**

- National Crop Forecasting Centre (NCFC): ISRO's CROP framework monitors crop progress using Optical and SAR satellites.
- **Remote Sensing & GIS:** Used for agriculture, urban planning, and disaster assessment.
- ISRO Satellites: RISAT-1A, Oceansat-3, Resourcesat-2A.
- Wheat sown area (2024-25): 330.8 lakh hectares, close to Ministry of Agriculture data
- Major wheat states (Wheat Belt): Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana.
- Remote sensing supports precision agriculture and food security.

HIGH TEMPERATURE AND MANGO PRODUCTION**SUBJECT: AGRICULTURE**

- India's mango productivity has shown inconsistent trends, impacted by rising temperatures and climate variability.
- According to IMD, 2024 was the warmest year since 1901, with a temperature rise of 0.65°C above normal.
- Mango flowering and fruit setting are now affected by unseasonal heat, altering budding and ripening patterns.

- Indian productivity (7.9 MT/Ha) still lags behind China (8.74 MT/Ha) and Thailand (8.36 MT/Ha).
- Higher temperatures and erratic rainfall are causing early flowering, shorter fruiting periods, and yield decline.
- Key physiological stages (bud development, fruit setting, and ripening) are disrupted by heatwaves and humidity fluctuations.
- Area under mango cultivation in India rose by 2.34% in 2023–24 to 24.81 lakh hectares.
- Production increased 2.43% to 202.72 lakh tonnes, but yield remains inconsistent year-to-year due to climate stress.

BILATERAL

IS INDIA FIRMLY SET TO MANAGE U.S RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL SANCTIONS

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- U.S. President Donald Trump threatens sanctions on Russian oil imports, urging India to align with U.S. policies.
- **India's Oil Imports:**
- Russia supplies 1.9 mb/d of crude oil to India in 2024 (up from 0.9 mb/d in 2022).
- Russia's share in India's oil imports: 14.5% in February 2023, now 30% in 2024.
- Other Suppliers: Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE; China is Russia's top export destination.
- Challenges: Sanctions could disrupt India's oil supply (88% imported). ◦ India may shift to Moscow or diversify imports to mitigate risks.
- Union Minister's Stance: Hardeep Singh Puri emphasizes diversifying oil sources to manage sanctions

CHINA – INDIA TIES ACROSS THE PAST AND INTO THE FUTURE

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- India was first non-socialist country to establish diplomatic ties with China in 1950.
- **Key Cooperation Areas:** Trade (\$3B in 2000 to \$135B in 2022), culture, education, tourism.

- **Strategic Dialogue:** Dialogue frameworks like SCO, BRICS, and RIC to manage the border issue and foster cooperation.
- **Future:** Strengthening bilateral ties while focusing on peaceful resolution of boundary issues.

MODI AND YUNUS SET ASIDE DIFFERENCES, DISCUSS MINORITIES, SITUATION AT BORDER

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- PM Modi met Bangladesh Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus during BIMSTEC summit in Bangkok, the first meeting since the change in regime in Dhaka.
- **India raised issues on:** Protection of minorities in Bangladesh
- Extradition request for former PM Sheikh Hasina ◦ Border security and terrorism concerns
- Bangladesh assured cooperation; Mr. Modi congratulated Yunus for assuming BIMSTEC chairmanship.
- **India's Support for Democratic Stability**
- India urged Dhaka to ensure a democratic, inclusive, and peaceful environment.
- Warned against rhetoric that could "vitiate the environment".
- **BIMSTEC Summit Diplomacy**
- This was the 6th BIMSTEC summit, linking South and Southeast Asia.
- Bangladesh to host the next BIMSTEC summit in 2026.
- **Meeting with Myanmar Junta Leader**
- PM Modi also met Myanmar's Gen. Min Aung Hlaing—first such meeting since the 2021 coup.
- India emphasized: Restoration of democracy through credible elections
- Inclusive governance in Myanmar
- **Regional Dynamics** – Nepal PM K.P. Sharma Oli also participated.
- India maintained engagements despite New Delhi not inviting Myanmar to past summits due to military rule.

MODI LAUNCHES INDIAN – AIDED RAILWAY PROJECTS ON LAST DAY OF SRI LANKA TRIP

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- Refurbished Maho-Omanthai railway line (128 km), advanced signalling system (Maho to Anuradhapura).
- **Funding:** Indian assistance (\$91.27 million for the railway line, \$14.89 million grant for signalling).
- **Significance:** Strengthens north-south rail connectivity in Sri Lanka.
- Other aspects of PM Modi's visit: Visit to Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi temple, defense, energy, and digitalization agreements.

INDIA, UAE TO DEEPEN DEFENCE COOPERATION

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- Agreement to make defence industry cooperation an "integral part" of bilateral ties.
- Focus on co-production, co-development, innovation, and technology.
- Commitment to deepen Coast Guard cooperation through a formal MoU.
- Rajnath Singh: Emphasized the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with UAE as a priority for India.
- Sheikh Hamdan: Highlighted the trust-based, history-driven relationship aimed at innovation and prosperity.
- **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2017):** Covers defence, energy, trade, and counter-terrorism.
- Defence Cooperation Agreement (2018), Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA, 2022).
- **Defence Cooperation:** Joint military exercises (e.g., Desert Cyclone).

THE BIMSTEC SUMMIT PROVIDED A PLATFORM FOR BILATERAL MEETINGS

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) aims to bridge SAARC (South Asia) and ASEAN (Southeast Asia).

- The grouping has been stagnant due to a lack of purpose and political tensions, especially after the collapse of India-Pakistan ties post-2014, which stalled SAARC.
- **Outcomes:** Agreements on a BIMSTEC chamber of commerce and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (connecting India's Northeast to the Pacific).
- Focus on disaster management, free trade agreement (FTA), and customs agreements under the 'Vision 2030' document.
- **Bilateral Meetings:**
- **India-Bangladesh:** PM Modi and Muhammad Yunus discussed minority treatment, border killings, and Sheikh Hasina's stay in India.
- **India-Nepal:** Modi met K.P. Sharma Oli to resolve tensions over a delayed invite.
- **Myanmar's Inclusion:** General Min Aung Hlaing attended, with Modi urging democratic restoration in Myanmar and Bangladesh.

INDIA ENDS TRANSSHIPMENT FACILITY FOR BANGLADESH EXPORTS, CITES CONGESTION

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- India withdrew the transshipment facility for Bangladesh (via Indian ports) citing "significant congestion" in Indian ports and airports.
- The move impacts ready-made garment exports from Bangladesh to Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar routed through India.
- **Government Justification & Timeline**
- Facility withdrawn effective April 8, 2025.
- MEA clarified the move is not intended to affect Bangladesh-Nepal-Bhutan trade.
- MEA cited logistical delays, cost hikes, and congestion at Indian customs points.
- **Contextual Significance** Comes after remarks by Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser to Bangladesh's interim government, on India-China trade routes in Northeast.
- No official confirmation that withdrawal is linked to these remarks.

THE BEIJING INDIA REPORT AS MILESTONE AND OPPORTUNITY

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- The Beijing India Report 2024 highlights lack of gender sensitivity in India's climate policies.
- Despite relevant laws (POSH Act, Domestic Violence Act), there's a gap in economic empowerment and fundamental rights.
- Rural women are frontline climate responders, yet face higher exposure to malnutrition, food insecurity, displacement, and mental health issues.
- Pregnant women in India show highest anaemia rates; over 50% lack access to consistent food.
- **Unpaid Labour and Time Burden**
- Indian women spend nearly 7.8 hours/day on unpaid tasks; projected to rise to 8.3 hours/day by 2050 without intervention.
- Indigenous women's practices (like forest-based livelihoods) promote sustainable agriculture.
- Their role in policy, food systems, and natural resource management must be recognized and scaled.
- Funding must support inclusive participation of women in green jobs and decision-making.
- Green budgeting and localised adaptation are key to inclusive development.

INDIA, AFRICA MARITIME ENGAGEMENT EXERCISE BEGINS OFF TANZANIA COAST

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- India-Africa Maritime Exercise (AIKEYME)
- **Event:** Inaugural Africa India Key Maritime Engagement (AIKEYME), April 13-18, 2025.
- **Location:** Off Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.
- **Participants:** India, Tanzania, Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa.
- **Ships:** INS Chennai (destroyer), INS Kesari, INS Sunayna (with 44 personnel from 9 nations).

- **Objective:** Address regional maritime challenges.
- Enhance interoperability among navies.
- **Alignment:** PM Modi's MAHASAGAR vision for security and growth.

SPOKE TO ELON MUSK ON COLLABORATION IN TECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- PM Narendra Modi spoke to Elon Musk, discussing avenues of collaboration in technology and innovation.
- Recalled earlier in-person meeting in Washington DC in February 2024. Highlighted India's commitment to strengthening ties with the U.S. in advanced tech domains.
- **Focus Areas**
- Talks revolved around expanding India-U.S. technology partnerships.
- Possible collaborations likely include:
- Electric mobility (Tesla)
- Satellite internet connectivity (Starlink)
- Innovation ecosystems
- Market Entry by Elon Musk's Companies
Tesla is exploring the Indian EV market actively. Starlink's entry is pending approval from the Department of Telecommunications for satellite internet services.
- Starlink team recently met with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal for policy-level discussions.

INDIA, CHINA AT 75 A TIME FOR STRATEGY NOT SENTIMENT

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- 75 years of India-China diplomatic ties; calls for strategic, realpolitik-based engagement.
- Relationship defined by border tensions (e.g., Galwan 2020), military standoffs, economic interdependence.
- **"China Lens":** India's strategic decisions (border defence, connectivity) shaped by China.

- **India's LAC policy:** 60,000+ troops in Eastern Ladakh, increased border infrastructure.
- **Economic paradox:** \$100 billion+ trade in 2024-25; dependency on Chinese APIs, electronics.
- **Goal:** Decoupling without disruption, boosting domestic capacity.
- **Competition in South Asia:** China's projects (Hambantota Port, Belt and Road) vs. India's proactive diplomacy.
- **U.S.-China tensions,** Trump's return add complexity; India prefers "multialignment."

INDIA MUST BE FIRM IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S ON TRADE AND TARIFFS

SUBJECT: BILATERAL

- U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance's visit to India was overshadowed by the Pahalgam terror attack, but his solidarity message was welcomed.
- His visit offered an opportunity to review the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) and discuss defence, energy, and immigration issues.
- Mr. Vance emphasised India as a key partner in co-producing defence equipment, and welcomed nuclear cooperation.
- India's concerns over tariffs on agri exports, student visa revocations, and market access barriers remain unresolved.
- The visit reflected more of a "listening mode" rather than concrete policy outcomes, underlining the need for clear strategic demands from India.

DEFENCE

XI JINPING CALLS FOR ELEPHANT DRAGON DUET ON 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF TIES BETWEEN INDIA, CHINA

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- **Diplomatic Anniversary:** 75 years of India-China ties, emphasizing mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.
- **Cooperation:** Focus on trade, development, and global South leadership.

- Continue strengthening ties through strategic dialogue and economic cooperation, particularly on multilateral issues.

CSIR – NAL SIGNS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER DEAL WITH FIRM TO MAKE HANSA TRAINER PLANES

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- CSIR–NAL signed a technology transfer agreement with Pioneer Clean AMPS Pvt. Ltd. to manufacture HANSA-3 NG trainer aircraft.
- First time such indigenous aerospace tech will be commercially produced in India.
- **About HANSA-3 NG**
- Two-seater aircraft with advanced digital avionics: Rotax digital engine
- Composite lightweight frame
- Glass cockpit with wide view
- Electrically operated flaps and safety features
- Developed fully by CSIR-NAL, used by IITs and Ministry of Civil Aviation.

CENTRE APPROVES RS.63,000 CRORE DEAL FOR PROCURING 26 RAFALE M JETS FROM FRANCE

SUBJECT: DEFENSE

- CCS approved a ₹63,000-crore deal to procure 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for Indian Navy from France.
- Includes 22 single-seater carrier-based jets and 4 trainer jets.
- Operational Impact Jets will operate from INS Vikrant, enhancing naval aviation capability.
- Delivery to begin 3.5 years post-contract signing; to be completed in 6.5 years.
- **Associated Developments** DAC already approved deal in July 2023.
- Part of broader India-France defence ties; includes another mega deal for Scorpene-class submarines.
- **Strategic Context**

- France demonstrated Rafale-M capabilities during Varuna Naval Exercise aboard Charles de Gaulle.
- Strengthens India's Indo-Pacific presence amid maritime security challenges.

DRDO TESTS LASER WEAPON SYSTEM THAT CAN DISABLE MISSILES AND DRONES

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- DRDO's Mk-II(A) Laser-Directed Energy Weapon (DEW).
- **Trial:** Successful at National Open Air Range, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh (April 2025).
- **Capabilities:** Disables missiles, drones, sensors at long range.
- Counters multiple drone attacks with precision.
- **Features:** Low-cost(firing costs ~litres of petrol).
- Engages at light speed; cuts targets via laser beam.
- **Impact:** Reduces reliance on expensive ammo, minimizes collateral damage.

INDIA, FRANCE TO FINALISE RS.63000 CR DEAL FOR 26 RAFALE M JETS ON APRIL 28

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- India and France are set to formally announce a ₹63,000 crore (approximately\$7.6 billion) government-to-government deal for 26 Rafale-M fighter jets on April 28th.
- The deal includes22 single-seat fighters and four twin-seat trainer aircraft compatible with aircraft carriers.
- The signing ceremony will be attended by the French Ambassador in India and the Indian Defence Minister. Delivery of the jets is expected to commence in three-and-a-half years and be completed within six-and-a-half years.
- This acquisition aims to enhance the Indian Navy's air power capabilities, particularly for its aircraft carriers.

INDIA, FRANCE FINALISE DEAL FO R26 RAFALE – M AIRCRAFT

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- India and France signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) on April 28, 2025, for26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy.
- Cost: ₹54,000 crore; deliveries to begin mid-2028, completion by 2030.
- Signed by: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and French Armed Forces Minister Sebastien Lecornu.
- Training, simulators, equipment, weapons (e.g., Astra Beyond Visual Range missiles), logistics
- Expected to generate thousands of jobs via production facility setup and maintenance/repair/overhaul (MRO) facilities.

STARLIN'S INDIA STRUGGLE : SPECTRUM, SURVEILLANCE AND CONNECTIVITY

SUBJECT: DEFENCE

- Starlink (SpaceX's satellite internet service) faces regulatory hurdles in India due to complex laws governing spectrum use,data security, and national sovereignty concerns.
- India's rural digital divide necessitates satellite-based broadband, but Starlink's rollout is delayed due to spectrum allocation,surveillance requirements, and compliance with Indian laws.
- Regulatory Roadblocks:
- Starlink must obtain a Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) license under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- Must align with: Satellite Communication Policy (2000)
- IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre)regulations
- Information Technology Act, 2000
- Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023
- **Spectrum use:**Requires auction and alignment with Indian allocation rules.
- **National Security:**Starlink must fulfill surveillance and real-time tracking conditions as mandated by Ministry of Home Affairs.

- **Infrastructure compliance:** Must coordinate with Indian satellite ground infra.
- Data localization and user verification are additional concerns under India's evolving digital laws.

ECONOMY

NITI AAYOG TO OPEN PORTAL ON STATES FINANCES TODAY

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- NITI Aayog launches a portal on state finances, developed with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
- **Purpose:** Benchmark state data on social, economic, and fiscal parameters against national figures.
- **Data Coverage:** Comprehensive repository of state data (1990-91 to 2022-23) across five verticals: demography, economy, fiscal, health, and education.
- **Features:** Includes macro, fiscal, demographic, and socio-economic trends.
- User-friendly format for researchers and policymakers.
- **Goal:** Facilitate understanding of state performance and national trends for better policy decisions.

BANKS TO PAY SAME INTEREST RATES: RBI

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Banks are required to pay uniform interest rates across all branches and customers.
- **Uniform Interest Rates:** Commercial banks are required to pay uniform interest rates on deposits (excluding current account deposits) across all their branches, ensuring consistency.
- There should be no discrimination in the interest rates between deposits of similar amounts, accepted on the same date, across different branches.
- **Transparency:** The interest rates cannot be negotiated between depositors and banks. They must be reasonable, consistent, and transparent.

- Banks must make these rates available for supervisory review as required.

INDIAN INDICES PLUNGE AS TRADE WAR FEARS GRIP GLOBAL MARKETS

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Stock markets globally crashed, but India is an exception, remaining resilient despite the turmoil.
- Since Donald Trump's inauguration as US President on January 20, 2025, the Sensex has been volatile.
- Despite the drop, Indian markets are advised to perform well over a 3 year horizon. Why?
- India's economy is domestic-driven, less impacted by global slowdowns.
- Corporate earnings growth.
- Policy stability.
- **How Big is the Threat of Recession?**
- Global Recession Concerns: US GDP growth slowed to 0.4% in 2024.
- Trump's policies (e.g., tariffs) have increased global market volatility.
- India's Position: India is relatively insulated due to its domestic-driven economy.
- However, it cannot be completely immune to global economic shocks.
- Investment Implication: Focus on stable, large-cap stocks to mitigate risks.

RBI PLANS MARKET BASED ROUTE TO SECURITISE BAD BANK ASSETS

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Securitisation of stressed assets (NPAs) via market-based mechanisms. ◦ Lenders can bundle NPAs into tradeable securities to share risk.
- **Mechanism:** Follows ARC (Asset Reconstruction Company) route under SARFAESI Act, 2002.
- Securities sold to a Special Purpose Entity (SPE) for management.
- **Static:**

- **SARFAESI Act, 2002:** Allows banks to recover NPAs without court intervention by seizing and selling assets.
- **Takeaway:** RBI aims to reduce banking sector stress through market-driven NPA management.

COUNTRIES MUST BUILD ON THEIR ECONOMIC STRENGTHS NOT CREATE TRADE BARRIERS

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- RBI cut repo rate by 25 bps to 6%, adopting an “accommodative” stance to stimulate growth.
- Aimed to support exporters amidst global trade tensions, esp. with the US-China tariff war.
- US raised tariffs on China to 125%; retaliatory tariffs by China reached 84%.
- Echoes historic economic nationalism (e.g., 1930’s Smoot-Hawley Act during Great Depression).
- Export sectors pressured by tariff uncertainty and weak global demand.
- RBI also lowered India’s GDP forecast to 6.5% due to slow retail inflation and food prices.

TRADE WARS BENEFITS NO ONE WE BELIEVE IN POWER OF OPEN MARKETS, FREE AND FAIR COMPETITION A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Tajani welcomed President Trump’s 90-day tariff pause, urging for similar negotiations between the EU and U.S.
- Emphasized zero tariffs as the ideal for boosting international commerce and business confidence.
- **EU-India Bilateral Trade & Investment Agreement (BTIA)** Both sides committed to finalizing BTIA in 2025; the current political will is stronger than in previous attempts.
- **Main hurdles:** India’s market access barriers, especially in wine, spirits, agriculture, and dairy products.
- Tajani highlighted a need for balanced terms tailored specifically to the EU, not identical to those in U.S.-India deals.

• **On Trump’s Approach**

- Criticized the lack of EU consultation by the U.S., including on contentious issues like Greenland.
- Urged open and honest U.S.-EU dialogue to prevent further transatlantic rift.
- **IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Corridor)** Tajani acknowledged delays due to geopolitical instability, particularly between Israel and its neighbors.
- Italy is proposing to promote IMEC via Trieste Port under the EU’s Global Gateway initiative as an alternative to China’s “Cotton Road.”

WEALTHY INDIANS ARE UNDER REPORTING THEIR INCOME TO AVOID TAXES

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- A study suggests wealthy Indians under-report income to avoid taxes, potentially worsening income inequality.
- National accounts, income tax data, and election candidate filings show a negative correlation between wealth and reported income wealth ratio.
- For the wealthiest, reported income is a fraction of their wealth.
- **Implications:** Regressive taxation structure where effective tax rates decrease with increasing wealth.
- Under-reporting of farm rent income and misuse of farmland ownership declarations are suspected.
- Affidavits of Lok Sabha MPs also suggest under reporting, except for candidates with high chances of winning, indicating the impact of scrutiny

SHAPING A RESPONSE TO THE U.S RECIPROCAL TARIFFS

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Trump announced reciprocal tariffs: existing commodity-wise tariffs + additional country-wise tariffs (e.g., 26% for India).
- Tariffs paused for 90 days (except China); floor rate of 10% for unlisted countries.

- Exemptions: steel, autos, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, energy, etc.
- **Formula:** $\text{U.S. discounted tariff rate} = (-1) * (1/2) * (\text{U.S. exports} - \text{U.S. imports}) / \text{U.S. imports}$.
- India's tariff: 26%(based on 2024 trade: \$41.8B exports, \$87.4B imports).
- India's U.S. exports low and declining; impact moderate but affects electrical machinery, gems, machinery, textiles.
- Competitors (China, Vietnam, etc.) face higher tariffs; South Korea at 25%.
- Avoid retaliatory tariffs(China's 125% led to U.S. escalation to 145–245%).
- Increase U.S. imports(e.g., \$25B in petroleum) to reduce tariff rate to 11.8%.
- Negotiate comprehensive trade deal with U.S.
- Monitor dumping by affected countries like China.

HOW CAN V2G TECHNOLOGY HELP INDIA'S POWER SECTOR?

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- V2G enables electric vehicles (EVs) to send power back to the grid when idle, functioning like decentralised energy storage units.
- When connected to bi-directional charger, idle EVs help stabilize grid demand.
- **Part of broader tech family:** V2G (grid), V2H (home), and V2V (vehicle).
- **Pilot Project: Kerala + IIT Bombay**
- The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) and IIT Bombay are piloting V2G integration across the state.
- **Aim:** Assess how EVs can support the grid during peak demand, especially when solar energy is not available.

NEW PATHWAYS FOR INDIA'S CREATIVE ECONOMY

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Creative economy spans arts, design, tech; valued at \$30 billion, employs 8% of workforce.

- Global creative exports: \$1.4 trillion in 2022; India's 2019 exports: \$121 billion.
- Creative output grew 20% last year, contributing \$11 billion.
- Grassroots innovations(e.g., mitti cool refrigerator) need investment, IP protection.
- **Policy suggestions:** "One district one innovation," stronger IP framework.
- UNCTAD's Creative Economy Outlook 2024 highlights India's potential.
- **Challenges:** Lack of institutional support, capital access, weak IP enforcement.

EXPERTS SEEK RIGHT TO COOL FOR INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS

SUBJECT: ECONOMY

- Heatwaves in India are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change.
- Experts propose recognizing "right to cool" as a legal and constitutional right under Article 21, focusing on thermal comfort and heat protection for vulnerable workers.
- Right to life under Article 21 includes dignified living conditions, which must now account for climate resilience.
- Women in the informal economy face compounded burdens during heatwaves—childcare, water scarcity, sanitation, and safety.
- Over 80% of India's workforce is informal, including street vendors, construction workers, and ragpickers, many of whom lack access to cooling infrastructure.
- A 2024 Greenpeace report found 61% of street vendors lost more than 40% of daily income due to heat, and 75% had no access to shaded or cooled spaces.
- The India Cooling Action Plan (2019) recognized cooling as a developmental need but lacked rights-based or enforceable frameworks.
- Urgent measures proposed include paid heat leave, free water ATMs, cooling shelters, and shaded rest areas, especially for women workers.

WHERE TARIFFS TRUMP ECONOMICS**SUBJECT: ECONOMY**

- The U.S. announced new reciprocal tariffs affecting a range of goods, particularly from South and Southeast Asia.
- These tariffs aim to counter trade deficits and protect domestic industries but risk triggering global trade tensions.
- **Asia Hit the Hardest:** Countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and India face the sharpest tariff hikes.
- For example, Vietnam and Cambodia saw 46% and 49% tariffs, respectively, threatening critical sectors like garment exports.
- India's Exposure: If tariffs persist, India stands to lose \$7.6 billion in exports to the U.S. (6.4% of total merchandise exports to U.S. in 2024).
- This underscores the urgency to secure trade diversification.
- Distorted Tariff Calculation Method: The U.S. method calculates tariffs based on trade deficits but ignores services.
- This one-size-fits-all approach fails to reflect actual economic interdependence

INDIA'S INDUSTRIAL SECTOR REQUIRES POLICY INTERVENTION AMID GLOBAL TURBULENCE**SUBJECT: ECONOMY**

- India's IIP growth in FY25 averaged 4%, the lowest in four years, indicating an industrial slowdown.
- Contributing factors: global economic uncertainty, low exports, weak domestic consumption, and declining private capital expenditure.
- Sharp decline seen in mining (2.9%), manufacturing (4%), and electricity (5.1%).
- Consumer non-durables contracted by 1.6%, reflecting stressed rural demand; whereas durables grew from 3.6% to 8%, hinting at urban consumption resilience.

ENVIRONMENT**WHY INDIA NEEDS TO CLEAN ITS AIR****SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT**

- Chronic issue influenced by urban sprawl, economic disparity, weak governance.
- **Challenges:** Poor real-time tracking ○ Fragmented responsibilities ○ Lack of localized data
- **Recommendations:** Shift to micro-level emission tracking
- Integrate air quality goals into urban planning
- Avoid "Western trap" of elite-centric solutions

SC DIRECTS CEC TO SURVEY FORESTS IN AGASTHYAMALAI FOR ENCROACHMENTS**SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT**

- Supreme Court directed Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to conduct an extensive survey of Agasthyamalai tropical forests in the southern Western Ghats.
- Objective: Identify encroachments, non-forestry activities, and initiate restoration of pristine habitats.
- Ecological Significance
- Agasthyamalai is a 3,500 sq. km UNESCO-recognised biosphere reserve shared by Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Includes Periyar Tiger Reserve, Srivilliputhur Sanctuary, and other key wildlife corridors.
- Depletion Concerns– Court cited urbanisation, unchecked industrialisation, and plantations as key drivers of forest degradation.
- A comparative report will assess forest cover changes over decades to guide future conservation.
- Legal Context & Community Impact – Came in response to petitions regarding depletion of reserved forests and rehabilitation of evicted workers (e.g., Singampatti estate case under Wildlife Protection Act)

INDOOR AIR POLLUTION, CAN BETTER DESIGN HELP PROTECT OUR HEALTH**SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT**

- People spend 70–90% of their time indoors, yet indoor air pollution (IAP) remains under-discussed.
- Sources include: cooking fuels, household cleaners, mosquito coils, paints, construction materials.
- Linked to respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes.
- Effects may manifest long after exposure—requires greater attention.
- Solutions include better ventilation, daylight integration, use of HEPA filters, plant-based green elements, and low-VOC materials.
- Post-COVID-19 architecture has seen a focus on filtered air, easy-to-maintain materials, and air zoning.
- 2021 study shows correlation between poor IAQ and increased health risks during lockdowns.

THE CONSERVATION ARGUMENT FOR RESURRECTING DIRE WOLF IS NOT CREDIBLE

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- U.S. firm attempts to revive extinct species (e.g., woolly mammoth, dire wolf) using genome editing and cloning techniques.
- Aim: Restore ecosystems and combat climate change (e.g., grasslands absorbing methane).
- Scientific Criticism and Credibility Gaps
- Only 20 genes edited in dire wolf; output is a “strange-looking gray wolf” with no peer-reviewed validation.
- Critics argue that such speculative projects divert attention and funds from urgent conservation of existing species.
- Projects lack ecological oversight and risk being misused for marketing or nationalist propaganda.
- Funding millions on gene revival while biodiversity continues to decline due to habitat loss is seen as misplaced prioritisation

UNDERWATER HEAVYWEIGHT MANTIS SHRIMP ALSO PACKS A NATURAL ENERGY SHIELD

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- Mantis shrimp uses a hammer-shaped dactyl club to strike prey at speeds of 23 m/s, faster than a bullet from a gun.
- The strike causes cavitation, where water density drops, forms low-pressure bubbles, and creates shockwaves when they collapse.
- Biological Shock Absorption Despite the impact, mantis shrimp remains unharmed due to a specialised microstructure in its club that exhibits phononic shielding—it blocks shockwaves and absorbs energy.
- This duo-mode of wave control and structural strength protects the shrimp while enhancing strike efficiency.

ODISHA TO MAHARASHTRA VIA LANKA 4500 KM JOURNEY OF TURTLE 03233

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- Olive Ridley turtle (ID: 03233) tagged by Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) on March 18, 2021, at Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary, Odisha.
- Found nesting in Ratnagiri's Guhagar beach, Maharashtra, in early 2024; laid 125 eggs, 107 hatched.
- Travelled 4,500 km: Gahirmatha (Odisha) → Jaffna (Sri Lanka) → Thiruvananthapuram → Ratnagiri (Maharashtra).
- First recorded Olive Ridley tagged on east coast (Odisha) nesting on west coast (Maharashtra).
- Route via Pamban corridor (Rameswaram to Tamil Nadu mainland).
- Tagging: Tagged with two metal flipper tags by ZSI (2021); Flipper tags used (cost-effective); satellite tags not used.
- Gahirmatha (Odisha): Major nesting site for Olive Ridleys; 12,000 turtles nest annually.
- 64 turtles tagged in Odisha (2021–2024); Ratnagiri emerging as a west coast nesting site.
- Monitored by Maharashtra Forest Dept., Konkan coast, and Wildlife Institute of India (WII).

IS THE ONCE EXTINCT DIRE WOLF BACK?

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- On April 7, Texas-based biotech firm Colossal Biosciences claimed to have “resurrected” the dire wolf, a predator extinct for over 12,000 years.
- Three dire wolf pups were reportedly born; the event was called “first howls on Earth in 10 millennia.”
- DNA-Based De-Extinction
- Genomes of gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) and dire wolves (*Aenocyon dirus*) are 99.4% identical (2.445 billion DNA bases match).
- Using CRISPR, scientists edited gray wolf DNA to include dire wolf-like traits, focusing on 20 genomic changes linked to diet, skull structure, etc.

ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY MUST ROLL BACK ORDER ON DESULPHURISING COAL PLANTS

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- In 2015, the Environment Ministry mandated all coal-fired thermal plants (537 total) to install Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) systems to reduce SO₂ emissions.
- FGD costs ~₹1.2 crore/MW and increases water and power consumption of plants.
- **Compliance Status**
- Only 8% of plants have installed FGD by 2024.
- Compliance deadlines now extended to 2027, 2028, and 2029 based on plant category.
- 230 plants in various stages of installation; 260 have not yet placed orders
- **NIAS Study Recommendations**
- Conducted by National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru, for the Principal Scientific Adviser.
- FGD should be mandatory only for plants using imported or high sulphur coal (>0.5%).
- Most Indian coal has sulphur content of 0.3–0.5%—below global concern levels.
- 92% of India’s coal use falls within this low-sulphur range

TWO KUNO CHEETAHS TO BE MOVED TO GANDHI SAGAR ON APRIL 20

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- Two male cheetahs identified for relocation
- From: Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh
- To: Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Mandsaur and Neemuch districts
- This is the second phase of cheetah reintroduction in India since the species was brought back in 2022.
- Kuno was developed as a habitat for cheetahs under the Cheetah Project, but space and human-animal conflict are key concerns. Significance
- Helps reduce pressure on Kuno National Park by diversifying habitats.
- Shows commitment towards long-term cheetah population stabilization and breeding success.
- Enhances prospects of ecotourism and community involvement in conservation.

WITH BIG CAT COUNT RISING, M.P. TO DEVELOP BUFFER ZONES AROUND ITS 9 TIGER RESERVES

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- Madhya Pradesh government approved the ‘Development of Buffer Zones in Tiger Reserves’ scheme.
- The scheme includes: Chain-link fencing in ecologically sensitive buffer zones
- Development of grasslands and water sources
- Fire safety measures
- Wildlife protection infrastructure
- Health monitoring and treatment for wild animals
- Skill development training for local communities to promote eco-sensitive livelihoods
- The scheme has a budget outlay of ₹145 crore for 2025–26 and 2027–28.
- Madhya Pradesh, often referred to as the “Tiger State” of India, leads in tiger conservation with nine reserves, including

the newly inaugurated Madhav National Park(March 2024). Tiger population in MP's buffer zones increased from 526 to 785 in four years.

- Conservation efforts include fencing, grassland development, and skill training for local communities.

AIR POLLUTION IN INDIA – WHERE DOES IT COME FROM

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- India reported 1.05 million premature deaths in 2021 due to air pollution, highlighting a severe public health crisis.
- Energy production is the largest contributor to sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions (7.59 million tonnes).
- Transport is the leading source of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and a major contributor to black carbon and methane.
- Agriculture is the largest emitter of methane (19.35 million t), primarily from livestock and rice paddies.
- Buildings and domestic fuel burning contribute significantly to non methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) and black carbon

THE MOSQUITO EFFECT: HOW MALARIAL CHAOS INFLUENCED HUMAN HISTORY

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- 1880: Alphonse Laveran identifies the malaria parasite;
- 1898: transmission cycle via Anopheles mosquito confirmed.
- Breakthroughs by Camillo Golgi, Angelo Celli, Patrick Manson and others transform understanding of disease ecology
- **Colonial Expansion & Racial Hierarchies**
- High malaria mortality (≈ 500 deaths/1,000 European troops annually) initially limited inland African colonisation;
- Africa dubbed “the white man’s grave”
- Post-1880 knowledge enabled drainage of swamps, segregated quarters, hill stations—fuelled the “Scramble for

Africa,” with European control rising from 10 % (1870) to 90 % (1914).

- Genetic resistance in Africans drove trans-Atlantic slave-labour demand and fed pseudo-scientific racial theories that persist socially. Technological & Medical Milestones
- Quinine(17th c.), chloroquine & artemisinin drugs, insecticide impregnated nets, indoor residual spraying.
- 2024 WHO report notes new RTS,S vaccine offers partial protection; research ongoing for second-generation jabs.

RNA BASED ANTIVIRAL OFFERS STRONG DEFENCE AGAINST DEADLY AGRI VIRUS

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- RNA-based antiviral (HIGS and SIGS) to combat Cucumber Mosaic Virus (CMV) in agriculture.
- CMV affects 25-30% of crops (e.g., cucumbers, melons, bananas); causes mosaic discoloration, stunted growth.
- RNA silencing using double-stranded RNA (dsRNA) to target CMV genes. Methods: Host-Induced Gene Silencing (HIGS) and Spray-Induced Gene Silencing (SIGS).
- Reduces infection by 80%; cost-effective, environmentally friendly

EXPANDING TREE COVER IS CRUCIAL

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT

- India's forest and tree cover is 25.17%, significantly below the 33% target set by the National Forest Policy, 1988.
- Tree plantations are critical to mitigating climate change, enhancing carbon sequestration, improving soil health, and supporting rural livelihoods.
- Industrial growth, rapid urbanisation, and deforestation are major contributors to ecological degradation
- **National Programs for Afforestation:** Policies like National Afforestation Policy (2014) and Trees Outside Forests in India (TOFI) aim to mobilize landowners, farmers, and industries.

- Green India Mission(GIM), under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, targets revival of degraded forests.
- **Private Sector and CSR Involvement:**
- Corporates from sectors like cement, energy, and automotive engage in afforestation to meet ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) goals and offset emissions.
- Companies leverage carbon credits and participate in carbon offset markets.

GEOGRAPHY

SUMMER SET TO BE WARMER, BUT EL NINO UNLIKELY DURING NEXT MONSOON : IMD

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- India Meteorological Department (IMD) rules out El Niño in the upcoming southwest monsoon season.
- **El Niño Impact:** El Niño, characterized by warming of the equatorial Pacific Ocean, often leads to reduced monsoon rainfall in India.
- **Climate Forecast:** IMD Director-General predicts neutral El Niño conditions, meaning no significant temperature rise in the Pacific.
- **Last Year (2023):** An El Niño year with an 8% monsoon rainfall deficit.
- **Summer Outlook (April-June):** Above-normal heatwave days expected in north, east, central India, and northwest plains.
- **Monsoon Outlook:** Below-normal rainfall expected in April; detailed monsoon forecast to be released in April.
- **Heatwave Prediction:** 4-7 heatwave days in April-June with temperatures exceeding 45°C or a 5°C rise above normal in eastern India.

MYANMAR EARTHQUAKE OCCURRED

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- On March 28, a powerful earthquake of magnitude 7.0 hit central Myanmar, ~20 km from Mandalay (second-largest city).
- Followed by aftershocks, including one of 6.4 magnitude, a few minutes later.

- Part of Saging Fault, one of the most active strike-slip faults in Southeast Asia.
- **Impact** – Devastating effects: Thousands feared dead/injured, major infrastructure damage in Myanmar.
- Thailand and Bangkok (1000 km away) experienced tremors, likely amplified by local geology and water-saturated sediments.
- Historical monuments in Bagan city (UNESCO site) also damaged – similar to 2016
- **Geological Explanation**
- Southeast Asia – Active Tectonic Region
- Lies at the junction of the Burma Plate and Sunda Plate, with multiple strike-slip and convergent boundaries.
- **Sagging Fault:**
- A continental transform fault, ~1,400 km long.
- Moves ~21 mm/year.
- Similar to San Andreas Fault (USA).
- One side slides past the other horizontally.
- Southeast Asia is seismically active due to plate interactions involving:
- Indian Plate
- Sunda Plate
- Eurasian Plate
- Burma Plate

UNDERSEA CABLES

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Main infrastructure connecting global internet networks.
- Heavily shielded fibre optic cables laid on sea floor; carry massive internet traffic.
- Landing points connect cables to data centers, routers on land.
- **India's Subsea Cable Ecosystem**
- India has 17 international landing stations (mainly in Chennai & Mumbai).

- New cable systems like Airtel's 2Africa Pearls and SEA-ME-WE 6 expanding capacity.
- India still depends heavily on a few landing hubs, making it vulnerable to disruptions.
- **Key Challenges**
- **Bureaucratic Delays:** Companies need clearances from 15+ ministries for a single cable.
- **Security Restrictions:** Permits often delayed due to red tape from Navy, local authorities.
- **Repair & Maintenance Delays:** Need better local repair capabilities.
- **Global Trends and India's Lag**
- Most global cable routes avoid Indian waters, considered over-regulated.
- Companies prefer routes via Singapore or Red Sea to avoid Indian bureaucratic hurdles. India-specific Angle
- India must simplify permissions, increase investment in landing facilities.
- Strengthening undersea cable ecosystem crucial for Digital India, cybersecurity, and strategic autonomy.

HADEAN PROTOCRUST: HOT AND HELLISH

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- The Earth's earliest crust, formed during the Hadean eon (within 200 million years of Earth's formation).
- Characterized by a partially molten surface, frequent asteroid impacts, and intense volcanic activity.
- **Formation:** As the magma ocean cooled, portions solidified to form the protocrust, which was initially unstable and fragmented.
- Thicker sections eventually became the first continents.
- **Plate Tectonics:** The movement of Earth's lithospheric plates over the asthenosphere. Processes like subduction (one plate diving under another) leave distinct chemical traces in the crust.
- These chemical signatures have been used to reconstruct the history of plate tectonics.

- **New Study's Findings:** Researchers from Macquarie University and an international team suggest that the chemical signatures previously attributed to plate tectonics were already present in the Hadean protocrust before subduction began. This challenges the established understanding of early plate tectonics.

SKYMET FORECASTS NORMAL MONSOON – LA NINA WEAK

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- La Niña (linked to increased rainfall) was weak and brief; El Niño (linked to reduced rainfall) is ruled out.
- Second half of the monsoon (August–September) expected to be better than the first half.
- Seasonal winds bringing heavy rainfall to India, primarily from June to September.
- **Significance:**
- **Agriculture:** 52% of India's farmland depends on monsoon rains.
- **Economy:** Impacts GDP, food inflation, and rural livelihoods.
- **Factors Influencing Monsoon:** El Niño: Warmer Pacific waters, often reduces rainfall.
- La Niña: Cooler Pacific waters, often increases rainfall.
- Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD): Temperature difference in the Indian Ocean; positive IOD enhances rainfall.

AS WILDFIRES SCORCH THE EARTH, THE ARCTIC BIOME REJECTS MORE CARBON

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Wildfires in 2025 released 800,000 tonnes of carbon in January alone, 4x the amount from a decade ago.
- U.S. (Texas, Oklahoma, California), and Japan faced severe fires, causing mass evacuations and ecosystem damage.
- **Arctic Turning into Carbon Source**
- The Arctic Boreal Zone (ABZ), once a carbon sink, is now emitting more carbon than it absorbs.

- ABZ includes vast coniferous forests and permafrost, which are losing carbon storage capacity due to global warming and wildfires.
- **Study Findings & Regional Trends**
- **Study in Nature Climate Change**
shows: Alaska accounts for 40% of Arctic fire emissions,
- Northern Europe and Siberia ~25–33%.
- **Seasonal shift:** Most Arctic wildfires now occur in warmer months (June to September).
- **Warming Trends & Climate Feedback Loop**
- Rising average surface temperature in India: 0.3–0.5°C per decade in northern areas
- 0.2–0.4°C per decade in peninsular India

IMD FORECASTS ABOVE NORMAL MONSOON

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- IMD projects “above normal” monsoon for 2025, with rainfall expected to be 5% higher than the historical average of 87 cm.
- Would mark the second consecutive year of above-normal rainfall (previous year saw 8% surplus).
- **Agricultural & Water Implications**
- Could ensure sufficient water for kharif crops and enhance reservoir storage.
- However, potential intense rain episodes may lead to flooding risks.
- **Scientific Parameters & Model**
- **Factors Driving Optimism**
- Weak El Niño and warming of the central equatorial Pacific signal increased rainfall.
 - Low Eurasian snow cover from Jan–Mar 2025 also correlates with higher monsoon activity (inverse relationship).
- **IMD’s Dynamical Model**
- IMD uses a dynamical coupled model simulating ocean-atmosphere interactions via supercomputers.
- 5 key parameters, including Eurasian snow cover, used for April forecast. Historical

data shows 33% correlation with monsoon strength.

MONSOON ANTICIPATION

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- ‘Above normal’ monsoon rainfall (5% above 87 cm average) expected for June–September 2025.
- Follows 8% above-normal rains in 2024; second consecutive year of good monsoon.
- Absence of El Niño (linked to weak monsoons in 6/10 years).
- Below-normal Eurasian snow cover (Jan–Mar 2025) has an inverse relationship with monsoon rainfall.
- Benefits kharif sowing, grain stocks, and pulse production (govt to procure at MSP to reduce imports).
- Cyclonic activity in Bay of Bengal/Arabian Sea will influence outcomes

THE COSMOS HOLDS LIMITLESS MYSTERIES FOR THE CONSTRAINED HUMAN MIND

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- University of Cambridge co-authored study suggests exoplanet K2-18b may be habitable.
- Paper reported detection of dimethyl sulphide/dimethyl disulphide, possible biosignatures.
- These molecules on Earth are linked with biological activity
- K218b a hycean world a planet with a hydrogen rich atmosphere possibly covering a water ocean. Its 124 light year away 2.6 times Earth’s diameter

BULLSEYE GALAXY WITH NINE RINGS MAY REVEAL DARK MATTER SECRETS

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Bullseye Galaxy (LEDA 1312434): Nine rings from dwarf galaxy collision.
- 2.5x larger than Milky Way; 130,000 light-years from dwarf galaxy.
- Collision caused star formation ripples; gas trail confirms interaction.

- Potential early-stage giant low surface-brightness (GLSB) galaxy.
- GLSBs: Low hydrogen, high dark matter; ideal for dark matter research.
- Observed via Hubble, Keck; published in Astrophysical Journal Letters.

COLD ATOMS IN SPACE CAN WEIGH THE HIMALAYAS

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Quantum gravity gradiometers (QGGs) use ultra-cold atoms and lasers to measure gravitational variations with high sensitivity.
- NASA scientists propose sending a QGG to space to measure mass shifts on Earth, such as ice loss and Himalayan weight.
- QGGs can detect subtle acceleration differences caused by underground or mountain mass.
- This can inform climate change studies, water/ice tracking, and national security surveillance.
- Can revolutionise climate impact assessment, glacial monitoring, and disaster preparedness, particularly in the Himalayas.
- Valuable for hydrocarbon exploration, ground water mapping, and infrastructure planning.
- Enhances strategic earth observation capabilities for national security and defence.
- The QGG setup is compact, consuming 350W power, weighing 125 kg, and could be deployed from low-Earth orbit

AMIDST REGIONAL FERMENT KURDS QUEST FOR STATEHOOD

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Kurds are the fourth-largest ethnic group in West Asia (25–45 million people), spread across Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, but remain stateless despite the 1920 Treaty of Sevres which promised autonomy
- Regional developments –from Israel’s hard-line policies and Iranian nuclear talks to Turkey’s domestic issues and Syria’s

reconstruction present both opportunities and risks for Kurdish ambitions.

- **Oppression and Resilience:** Kurds have faced persistent repression, notably in Turkey (e.g., criminalization of Kurdish language and parties like PKK).
- Despite this, Kurds have carved autonomous zones, especially in Iraq (Kurdistan Region) and Syria (via SDF-controlled northeast areas).
- **Global Dimension:** Kurdish aspirations are often subsumed under larger powers’ strategic interests.
- For instance, while U.S. support has empowered Syrian Kurds militarily, Iran, Turkey, and Syria oppose Kurdish statehood, fearing separatism within their borders.

CHANGES IN MONSOON AFFECT MARINE PRODUCTIVITY IN BAY OF BENGAL

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

- Published in Nature Geoscience; analyzed 22,000 years of climate data in the Bay of Bengal.
- Strong/weak Indian summer monsoons disrupt nutrient mixing, reducing marine productivity by 50%.
- Reduced plankton growth affects fish stocks, threatening food security for coastal communities.
- **Effects:** Rising sea temperatures, altered ocean currents, reduced nutrient mixing.
- **India’s Vulnerability:** 7,500 km coastline; 14% of population in coastal areas; fisheries contribute 1% to GDP.
- **Initiatives:** National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), Sagarmala (port-led development), Blue Economy focus

HISTORY

THE RADICAL AND ENDURING LEGACY OF SHIVAJI

SUBJECT: HISTORY

- Shivaji’s military genius, including his use of guerrilla tactics (ganimi kawa), led to the creation of the Maratha Empire.

- Reforms: Abolished the “vatandari” system
 - Implemented the “Ryotwari” system
- Opposed slavery
- Historical Significance: Known for his role in resisting Mughal expansion and for reforms that strengthened Indian society

FINDING THE RHYTHM OF A PAINTER'S INCREDIBLE LIFE, AN ALBUM SHEDS LIGHT ON RAJA RAVI VARMA'S OEUVRE

SUBJECT: ART AND CULTURE

- Musical tribute planned at Kilimanoor Palace to commemorate Raja Ravi Varma's 177th birth anniversary.
- Album titled “Pranamam” narrates Ravi Varma's childhood, artistic journey, and final days.
- Paintings The Parsi Lady and Portrait of Thriketta Thirunal Uma Amma Thampuratti unveiled by Kilimanoor Palace Trust.
- Ravi Varma collapsed and died while working on The Parsi Lady at studio Chitrashala.
- Ravi Varma is celebrated for blending Indian traditions with European techniques, giving divine faces to gods and goddesses.
- Annual celebrations at Kilimanoor Palace have become a significant event for art enthusiasts, honoring Ravi Varma's enduring influence

INTERNATIONAL

CHINA EU MUST JOINTLY RESIST UNILATERAL BULLYING SAYS XI

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- Criticized U.S. President Donald Trump's “unilateral bullying” via heavy tariffs on Chinese goods.
- Called on the EU to resist such practices jointly with China to protect mutual interests and global trade fairness.
- **China-EU Trade Importance** – China and Europe trade heavily; Spain alone imports €45 billion worth of goods from China annually.
- Xi emphasized maintaining cooperation despite rising tensions with the U.S.

- **Pedro Sanchez's Remarks** – Spanish PM supported continued cooperation, despite ongoing global trade tensions.
- Broke with EU's hardline stance on China during his September 2024 visit, calling for review of EU's punitive tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles.

CHINA IMPOSES 125% TARIFF ON U.S GOODS

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- China raised tariffs on U.S. goods to 125% in response to the Trump administration's escalating tariffs (raised to 145% on Chinese goods).
- Series of retaliatory hikes between April 2 and April 11 reflect deepening it-for-tat economic standoff
- Diplomatic Implications China's Customs Tariff Commission labeled the tariffs “a joke in world economic history.”
- Beijing reiterated openness to dialogue but warned of strong countermeasures if U.S. undermines its economic interests.
- Economic & Geopolitical Stakes U.S.-China tariff war risks destabilizing global trade flows, especially for emerging economies.
- This dispute may impact India via supply chain disruptions, trade diversion opportunities, and currency volatility

CHOKSI ARRESTED IN BELGIUM AMID INDIA PUSH FOR EXTRADITION

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- Fugitive businessman Mehul Choksi was arrested in Belgium on April 12, 2025, following India's renewed extradition efforts.
- He is wanted for his role in the ₹13,578 crore PNB bank fraud, along with his nephew Nirav Modi.
- Choksi had fled India in January 2018, days before the scam was revealed.
- **Previous Incidents and Legal Loopholes**
- In 2021, Choksi was detained in Dominica, claiming he had been abducted.

- The Interpol Red Notice against him was withdrawn in March 2023, complicating efforts to secure his return.
- Choksi is now an Antiguan citizen, who had later moved to Belgium allegedly for cancer treatment.
- The CBI has been pursuing extradition since 2018, but the process was delayed due to his citizenship and legal complexities.

THE ACCORD ON PATHOGEN ACCESS AND BENEFIT SHARING IS PATH BREAKING

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- WHO member states finalized Pandemic Agreement on April 16 for better pandemic preparedness.
- Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System (PABS). ◦ Countries sharing pathogen samples/genome sequences get equitable access to diagnostics, vaccines, treatments.
- Pharma companies to donate 10% production to WHO, offer 10% more at affordable prices.
- Negotiated over 3.5 years, 13 rounds; addresses COVID-19 inequities (vaccine hoarding by developed nations).
- Universal protection for health workers agreed upon.
- Technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, not voluntary/charity-based.
- Historical context: Echoes Indonesia's H5N1 stand (mid-2000s) for fair vaccine access.

EU'S FAR RIGHT VS JUDICIARY CONFLICT

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- A growing conflict between far-right nationalist leaders and judicial systems is escalating across the European Union.
- Legal rulings in France, Romania, and Germany have barred or investigated key far-right leaders, sparking accusations of political persecution.
- The tension underscores fears over judicial independence and the erosion of democratic norms.

- Rhetoric around “deep state”, “militant democracy”, and foreign influence is being used to discredit judicial actions.
- Analysts warn of a broader crisis of trust in democratic institutions across Europe.
- **Background/Context**
- Recent judicial decisions in several EU countries have targeted far-right leaders, often on grounds of financial irregularities, misinformation, or ties to extremism.
- Prominent examples include: Marine Le Pen in France (National Rally leader disqualified from elections)
- Calin Georgescu in Romania (disqualified over alleged subversive foreign ties)
- Alternative for Germany (AfD) under scrutiny by German domestic intelligence for anti-constitutional activities.

FRANCE MACRON SEEKS FORGIVENESS FOR COLONIALISM

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Madagascar incited discussions about France's colonial past and the path towards reconciliation.
- **Macron's Statement:**
- Acknowledged France's colonial presence in Madagascar as “not innocent” and containing “deeply painful pages.”
- He expressed a desire to work towards “forgiveness” and create conditions for mourning past wrongs.
- Proposed the return of cultural artifacts taken during colonization, including the skull of a Malagasy king.
- Advocated for collaboration between French and Malagasy historians to foster truth, memory, and reconciliation.
- **Historical Background:** Madagascar, the fifth-largest island globally, was under French colonial rule from the 19th century until gaining independence in 1960.

IS THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION STILL RELEVANT

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL

- WTO's negotiating arm (Doha Round), dispute-settlement mechanism (Appellate Body), and trade-monitoring role are all paralysed;
- only the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement has been concluded since 2001.
- **US-Led Unilateralism:** Successive US administrations imposed "national-security" tariffs (Sections 232 & 301) and withdrew/limited MFN treatment, signalling retreat from rules-based trade.
- **MFN & Consensus Challenges:** The Most-Favoured-Nation principle is increasingly bypassed; consensus decision-making is blocking timely reforms—EU's ad-hoc arbitration plan lacks universal buy-in.
- **Rise of FTAs:** Major economies prefer bilateral/regional trade agreements, adding complexity and marginalising developing countries that lack negotiation capacity.

NATIONAL

NEW PAMBAN BRIDGE AN ENGINEERING WONDER: PM

SUBJECT: NATIONAL

- Connects Rameswaram Island (Tamil Nadu) with the mainland (Ramanathapuram).
- **Significance:** India's first vertical lift sea bridge, built over the Palk Strait. Replaces the British-era Pamban bridge.
- **Features:** 2.08 km long, 72.5-meter vertical lift span (17 m high). Built with stainless steel reinforcement and high-grade protective paint to withstand the corrosive environment of the Palk Strait. 3 meters higher than the old bridge. • Cost: ₹531 crore.
- **Construction:** Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd.
- **Benefits:** Enhances rail connectivity, improves ship movement, boosts trade and tourism in Tamil Nadu.
- **Other projects inaugurated/launched:** New train services (Rameswaram Tambaram, Chennai), foundation stone for four-lane NH 40 (Walajahpet to AP border), dedicated three other four-lane highway projects in Tamil Nadu

INDIA RISING POWER DEMAND AND THE HYDROGEN FACTOR

SUBJECT: NATIONAL

- Achieving a net-zero economy requires widespread electrification and transition from fossil-based molecules to cleaner options like hydrogen.
- Government has targeted 100 GW nuclear power capacity by 2047.
- **Role of Nuclear Power**
- Nuclear is crucial as solar, wind, hydro cannot alone meet future electricity demand.
- NPCIL has planned 26 PHWRs (700 MW) with 10 under construction, following earlier projects in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Haryana.
- India is self-sufficient in PHWR technology and manufacturing capabilities

INDIA SLAMS DHAKA'S DISINGENOUS CALL ON PROTECTING RIGHTS OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

SUBJECT: NATIONAL

- India rejected Bangladesh's comment on protecting rights of Indian Muslims as "disguised and disingenuous".
- External Affairs Ministry emphasized that Bangladesh should focus on protecting its own minorities, referencing ongoing persecution of minorities in Bangladesh.
- **Triggering Event**
- Shafiqul Alam, press secretary to Bangladesh's Chief Advisor, refuted Indian allegations about Bangladeshi citizens being involved in Murshidabad anti Waqf Act protests.
- Called on India to protect Muslim rights following communal unrest.
- **Communal Violence & Waqf Act**
Backdrop Protests in West Bengal's Murshidabad district were linked to opposition to Waqf (Amendment) Act 2025.
- Allegations surfaced about foreign elements from Bangladesh being involved in fueling the unrest.

- India's Diplomatic Stand India highlighted its concerns over minority attacks in Bangladesh, post the political shift in Dhaka on August 5, 2024.
- Cited repeated incidents of violence and intimidation against religious minorities in Bangladesh.

PAKISTAN MUST ELIMINATE THE TERROR GROUPS WORKING ON ITS SOIL

SUBJECT: NATIONAL

- India's Cabinet Committee on Security(CCS) has decided on strong diplomatic actions against Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack.
- Measures include canceling the visa of Pakistani nationals, suspending the Attari-Wagah border Integrated Check Post (ICP), and stating no engagement with Pakistan unless it acts against terror groups.
- India will also push for the suspension of the Permanent Indus Commission meeting and site visits for Indus Waters Treaty projects.
- Pakistan's response, attributing Indian measures to internal compulsions, has been dismissive of India's concerns about terrorism.
- India emphasizes the need for Pakistan to dismantle terror infrastructure on its soil and take credible action against perpetrators.

THE UNSC STATEMENT ON PAHALGAM ATTACK APPEARS WATERED DOWN

SUBJECT: NATIONAL

- UNSC condemned the Pahalgam terrorist attack "in the strongest terms," but did not name the TRF(The Resistance Front) or its linkage to designated terror outfit LeT.
- The statement lacked reference to cooperation with India and failed to mention the targeting of non-Muslims.
- Observers described the language as "watered down", likely influenced by Pakistan's presence on the Council (2025-26) and China's support.

- India criticized the weak stance, calling for stronger global cooperation and efforts to bring perpetrators to justice.
- Reflects limitations of multilateral forums when political interests override moral clarity.
- Exposes UNSC's structural weakness in addressing state-sponsored terrorism.
- Underscores India's need for a multi-pronged strategy: legal, diplomatic, economic, and military.
- Strengthens the case for global consensus on terrorism definitions and universal accountability mechanisms

PERSONALITIES

GANDHI HAD RECOGNISED THE RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS

SUBJECT: PERSONALITIES

- Palestinians are the indigenous people of Palestine, and their right to the land has historical backing, including support from Mahatma Gandhi.
- Ambassador's statement — "Even Mahatma Gandhi had said that Palestine belongs to the Palestinians just like England belongs to the English people"
- **Criticism of Israel:** The ambassador condemned Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians and accused Prime Minister Netanyahu of obstructing the peace process.
- **Media Concerns:** He criticized international media for inadequate coverage of the situation in the West Bank.

PHULE – A CONSTANT GARDENER OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

SUBJECT: PERSONALITIES

- Jyotiba Phule, born April 11, 1827, to Malicaste, turned a personal insult at a Brahmin wedding into a lifelong battle against caste oppression.
- Along with wife Savitribai Phule, founded India's first girls' school in 1848 and many night schools for workers and oppressed communities. Opposition to Orthodox Hierarchies

- Phule challenged Brahmanical patriarchy, untouchability, and caste supremacy, supporting equal rights for Shudras, Atishudras, and women.
- He formed the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth-Seekers' Society) in 1873 to democratise spiritual and social discourse, opposing elitist reform groups like Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj.
- Advocated education as the primary tool of empowerment, especially for oppressed castes and women.
- Strong critique of religious orthodoxy and blind belief; wrote works like Satsarvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak questioning scriptural justifications of inequality.
- Viewed religion as a human construct that often legitimised slavery, superstition, and inequality.
- Called for land redistribution, improved farming technology, and state supported agricultural infrastructure to uplift marginalised rural populations.
- Suggested village schools and self-rule to counter poverty and ignorance.
- Believed state must ensure food, water, shelter, and economic dignity.

A TOWERING FIGURE IN INDIA'S SCIENTIFIC EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

SUBJECT: PERSONALITY

- Dr. Kasturirangan was the fifth Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation from 1994 to 2003. He was also the Secretary, Department of Space, for over nine years.
- Dr. Kasturirangan is credited with transforming ISRO's focus from experimental to operational space services, making space technology accessible to various sectors and the public.
- His tenure saw significant advancements in satellite communication (INSAT series), remote sensing (IRS series), and meteorological applications (METSAT, OCEANSAT).

- He was the project director of India's first two experimental earth observation satellites BHASKARA-I & II.
- He steered the first operational Indian Remote Sensing satellite IRS-1A.
- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) was launched and operationalised.
- The first successful flight testing of the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) took place under his leadership.
- Emphasized the societal benefits of space technology, extending its reach to tele education (EDUSAT), telemedicine, and communication.
- The National Natural Resource Management System (NNRMS), utilizing remote sensing data, was established during his tenure to aid in agriculture, forestry, water resource management, and urban planning. He spearheaded and laid the groundwork for the Chandrayaan-I mission, India's first lunar probe.

MURMU PRESENTS THE PADMA AWARDS TO 71 PERSONALITIES

SUBJECT: PERSONALITIES

- President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Padma award to 71 personalities out of 139 announced on the occasion of the 76th Republic Day.
- Awards given: Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri.
- Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan's Durbar Hall with the presence of top dignitaries including Vice-President, Prime Minister, and Union Ministers.
- **Padma Shri recognitions:** Included 30 unsung heroes, such as 100-year-old Libia Lobo Sardesai who contributed to Goa's freedom movement.
- Other awardees came from diverse fields like literature, arts, medicine, social work, and science.
- **Notable Padma Bhushan awardees:**
 - Pankaj Udhas, singer (posthumous).
 - Sushil Kumar Modi, former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister.

- P.R. Sreejesh, former hockey player.

POLITY

FAIR SEAT ALLOCATION IN LOK SABHA

SUBJECT: POLITY

- The upcoming Census and potential readjustment of Lok Sabha seats based on population.
- **Southern States' Concerns:** Northern states with higher population growth (due to less successful family planning programs) might gain a disproportionate number of seats, diminishing the South's political influence.
- **Proposed Solution:** Use the state with the lowest population growth (Kerala) as a benchmark. Increase seats in all states by the same percentage as Kerala's population growth (68%). This would maintain the current balance of power while acknowledging population changes.

COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM MUST GUIDE CONDUCT OF GOVERNORS

SUBJECT: POLITY

- Supreme Court ruling on Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's conduct in delaying bills
- **Issue:** Governor R.N. Ravi delayed 10 bills passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly, impacting Centre-State relations. Court's Ruling: Governors must act within constitutional responsibilities and not delay bills indefinitely.
- R.N. Ravi sent bills to President Droupadi Murmu after re-adoption by the Assembly, but the Court deemed this action "not bona fide" (arbitrary, non-established in law).
- Governors cannot delay bills whimsically or with impunity.
- **Federal Principle:** Raj Bhavan (Governor) must act with transparency and accountability. ◦ Governor's role is to assist the elected state government, not obstruct it.
- **Political Context:** Delays often occur in states ruled by parties opposing the central ruling party (BJP in this case).

- Governor R.N. Ravi, appointed by the BJP-led Centre, was seen as politically motivated against the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government.
- Governor's role in India: Appointed by the President, acts as a link between Centre and State (Article 153-162 of the Constitution).
- Governor's powers include giving assent to bills, but discretion must align with constitutional norms (Article 200).

SC JUDGEMENT ON T.N GOVERNOR ADDRESS A CONSTITUTIONAL SILENCE

SUBJECT: POLITY

- Supreme Court mandates Governors must decide on Bills within 3 months, ending the practice of indefinite withholding of assent.
- Addresses long-standing "Constitutional silence", as Article 200 of the Constitution doesn't fix time limits for Governors.
- Comes amid rising conflict between Governors and elected State governments (West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Kerala).
- TN Governor accused of political bias and delays, particularly in referring Bills to President.
- Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala & R. Mahadevan held that delay beyond 3 months is unconstitutional.
- Builds on 2023 Punjab ruling on "real power" resting with elected representatives.
- Warns that Governor's inaction or delay is liable to judicial scrutiny. Broader Implications
- Supreme Court also signalled fixing time limits for Speakers in anti defection proceedings (Tenth Schedule), citing 2020 Keisham Meghachandra Singh judgment.
- Reinforces institutional checks on both constitutional offices to prevent political misuse

A PROCLAMATION OF DEMOCRACY IN LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

SUBJECT: POLITY

- In a landmark case (State of Tamil Nadu vs. Governor of Tamil Nadu), the Supreme Court invoked Article 142 to deliver complete justice by fixing time limits for gubernatorial and presidential assent to State Bills.
- The Court ruled that Governors cannot indefinitely withhold assent to Bills passed by legislatures that reflect the people's will.
- **Relevance of Articles 200 & 201**
- **Article 200:** Gives Governors options—assent, withhold, or reserve for President. Once a returned Bill is re-passed without amendment, the Governor must assent.
- **Article 201:** Specifies the President's role on reserved Bills, including the ability to withhold or return a Bill for reconsideration, but not withhold indefinitely.

A RESTORATION OF SANITY TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM

SUBJECT: POLITY

- State of Tamil Nadu vs. The Governor of Tamil Nadu and Anr.
- **Context:** Governor R.N. Ravi withheld assent to 10 Bills passed by Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly for years without decision.
- Assembly passed the Bills again and sent them again. Governor forwarded to President instead of giving assent. Supreme Court Verdict (April 8, 2025)
- **Landmark ruling:** Bills passed by State Assembly twice and withheld without reason must be deemed assented.
- President's assent cannot override democratic legislative will when not constitutionally warranted.
- The Court invoked Article 142 to ensure all 10 withheld Bills were considered passed.
- Interpretation of Article 200
- The Governor has no veto or absolute power under Article 200.
- He must act within a reasonable time and follow the course of:
- Giving assent

- Withholding assent
- Returning the Bill for reconsideration
- Reserving for the President
- **Issue with President's Role**
- The Governor's act of forwarding Bills to the President after State's reconsideration—was held unconstitutional.
- President's withholding of assent in such a case was declared ultra vires, as the constitutional path had been exhausted.

WONT DIRECTING CENTRE TO PROTECT BENGAL FROM VIOLENCE AMOUNT TO JUDICIAL INCURSION

SUBJECT: POLITY

- Supreme Court questioned if directing Centre to invoke Article 355 in Bengal would be judicial overreach.
- **Context:** Plea for paramilitary deployment in Bengal due to protests over Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.
- Justice B.R. Gavai (next CJI) raised concerns about judiciary interfering with executive functions.
- **Article 355:** Union's duty to protect states from internal disturbance, ensure constitutional governance.
- **Debate:** Can courts issue writ of mandamus to enforce Article 355 without encroaching on executive discretion?
- **Related issues:** Tamil Nadu Governor's delay in bill assent; contempt proceedings against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey for remarks against SC, CJI Sanjiv Khanna.
- Another SC bench allowed withdrawal of plea for court-monitored SIT probe into Bengal violence.

A MOVE THAT ENDANGERS THE RIGHT TO VOTE

SUBJECT: POLITY

- Linking Aadhaar with voter ID may violate the right to vote, risking disenfranchisement due to errors and coercion.
- The ECI's claim of voluntary linkage is contested; Form 6B offers no real choice, creating indirect compulsion.

- Supreme Court and High Courts have previously ruled that Aadhaar is not proof of citizenship.
- Concerns include misuse of DBT data, exclusion of voters, and violation of privacy principles under the Puttaswamy judgment.
- Past failures in similar linkage attempts (Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, 2015) led to mass voter deletions

THE POST OF DEPUTY SPEAKER IS NOT SYMBOLIC OR OPTIONAL

SUBJECT: POLITY

- Article 93 mandates that the Lok Sabha shall "as soon as may be" elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker.
- The office of the Deputy Speaker has remained vacant throughout the 17th Lok Sabha (2019–2024) and continues into the 18th.
- Constitutional experts assert this delay is not a procedural lapse but a serious constitutional anomaly.
- Deputy Speaker ensures continuity of House proceedings in the absence of the Speaker, safeguarding procedural neutrality.
- Historically, the Deputy Speaker's office has promoted bipartisanship, often held by the Opposition.
- Absence of a Deputy Speaker disrupts democratic norms and weakens parliamentary functioning.
- Reflects executive over reach and poor commitment to constitutional propriety.
- Appointment is essential for ensuring institutional stability, neutrality, and opposition representation.
- Signals need for parliamentary reform to enforce compliance with constitutional mandates

SCHEMES

GOVT'S ANGANWADI- CUM CRECHE PLAN COULD ENABLE WORKING MOTHERS TO STAY IN WORKFORCE

SUBJECT: SCHEMES

- Convert 500 anganwadis into anganwadi-cum-creche centers under the 'Palna National Creche Scheme'.
- **Budget:** ₹50 crore allocated by the Delhi government.
- **Aim:** Provide quality childcare (6 months to 6 years), enabling working mothers to remain employed.
- **Current Status:** 200 centers converted, 300 more in progress.
- **Features of Upgraded Centers:** Multipurpose area (play/sleep), resting spaces, extended hours (until 5 pm).
- **Challenges:** Space constraints, especially in slum areas. Funding issues have led to the closure of some previously established creches.
- **Beneficiaries:** 4.2 lakh children (6 months-3 years), 1.6 lakh children (3-6 years) registered in Delhi anganwadis (2023 data).

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BIPOLAR DISORDER, COMPLEX BUT SURMOUNTABLE BY EARLY DIAGNOSIS

SUBJECT: SCIENCE

- Bipolar disorder involves extreme mood swings (mania and depression), often triggered by stress, genetics, and environment.
- **Prevalence:** National Mental Health Survey: 60-85% of bipolar cases are hereditary.
- **Symptoms:** Mania: High energy, impulsivity, delusions.
- Depression: Fatigue, hopelessness, suicidal thoughts.
- **Causes:** Genetic: 50-85% hereditary; influenced by environmental factors.
- Environmental: Stress, childhood trauma, life events.
- **Diagnosis Challenges:** Often misdiagnosed as depression; requires careful clinical evaluation.
- **Management:** Early diagnosis, medication, and therapy can help manage symptoms effectively.

WHAT IS VIBE CODING, HOW DOES IT HELP NON CODERS?

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- A method for non-programmers to generate code using AI tools like OpenAI and Karpathy's models.
- Users describe tasks in natural language (e.g., "vibes" like "pineapple pizza"), and AI generates the code.
- Users input tasks in natural language (e.g., build a digital tool, design a website).
- AI tools like LLMs (Large Language Models) interpret the input and generate code.
- Examples include generating code for a pop-up tool based on user preferences.
- **Advantages:** Enables non-programmers to create code for personal projects without formal coding knowledge.
- Reduces the need for low-stakes projects to require extensive coding skills.
- Offers a creative outlet through "vibes" rather than technical coding

CHANDRAYAAN'S ChaSTE TAKES THE MOON'S TEMPERATURE

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Measure lunar surface and subsurface temperatures near the south pole. This data helps determine the presence and prevalence of water ice.
- **Mechanism:** A 10-sensor thermal probe penetrates the lunar soil using a rotation-based deployment mechanism. The probe measures temperature at different depths up to 10 cm.
- **Success:** ChaSTE successfully deployed its probe, marking the first successful penetration and temperature measurement of a celestial body's soil after previous missions (Philae on Comet 67P and InSight's HP3 on Mars) faced challenges.
- **Key Difference:** Unlike the hammering mechanisms used by Philae and InSight, ChaSTE employed a rotating mechanism, enabling successful probe deployment and data collection.

- **Significance:** ChaSTE's data suggests a higher prevalence of water ice on the moon than previously anticipated. This information is crucial for future lunar missions and resource utilization.

DIGITAL CHILD ABUSE. THE DANGER OF AI – BASED EXPLOITATION

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- UK's AI Safety Institute flags rise in AI-generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM).
- Proposed law criminalizes possession, use, and dissemination of AI generated CSAM—shifting from act-based to tool-centric accountability.
- **India's Current Scenario** – NCRB recorded 1.94 lakh child pornography incidents (2024).
- 69,000 cyber tip-line reports shared via NCMEC (USA).
- India's laws (POCSO, IT Act) lack provisions for AI-generated CSAM.
- **Legal Gaps in India** – Current laws punish publishing or sharing explicit content but lack clarity on AI-generated material.
- No recognition of CSAM as a separate category; legislative ambiguity persists.
- **Proposed Reforms** – Replace "child pornography" with "CSAM".
- Broaden "sexually explicit" to include digital representations.
- Expand "intermediary" definition to include VPNs and Cloud services.
- **International Models** – UK law and UN's Convention on Countering Cybercrime offer robust frameworks.

THE OTHER SPACE RACE – THE GEOPOLITICS OF SATELLITE NET

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- **India's Stand:** Balancing foreign players (Starlink) with strategic autonomy.
- **Strategic Models:**
- **China's GuoWang:** Sovereignty-focused.

- **Starlink model:** Market-driven, raises dependency risks.
- **Partnerships:** Starlink + Airtel/Jio.
- India is still pursuing ISRO-led satellite capability.
- Concerns over data security, monopolization, and BSNL viability

GENOME STUDY : 180 MILLION GENETIC VARIANTS FOUND IN 9772 INDIVIDUALS

SUBJECT: SCIENCE

- Blood samples from 20,000 individuals; 10,074 underwent whole genome sequencing.
- Median sample size: 159 (non-tribal), 75 (tribal)
- **Populations:** Tibeto-Burman, Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic tribes, and non-tribes.
- **Findings:** 180 million genetic variants identified. ◦ Variants include those associated with diseases, rare variants, and those unique to India or specific communities.
- Next Steps: Analyze variants for disease relevance, therapeutic responses, and adverse effects.
- Develop low-cost diagnostic kits and advance personalized medicine.
- **Data Storage:** Genome sequence data is stored at the Indian Biological Data Centre, Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad.

OPENAI'S GHIBLI STYLE AI IMAGE GENERATOR AND COPYRIGHT LAW

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- OpenAI's GPT4o update generates Studio Ghibli-style images, sparking controversy.
- **Controversial Uses:** IDF's militaristic images; 9/11, Babri Masjid depictions.
- Contradicts Miyazaki's anti-war, anti-AI stance.
- **Ethical Concerns:** Misappropriation of Ghibli's pacifist ethos.
- Lack of transparency in AI training data.

- US law: Styles not copyrightable; only specific works protected.
- Fair use debate: AI training vs. creator rights.
- Ongoing case: Andersen vs Stability AI (copyright infringement undecided).
- **Solutions:** Anti-AI tools (e.g., Glaze) to protect art.
- Robots.txt to limit scraping (non-binding).
- Social/labor policies over copyright expansion.

HOW IS SPACEFLIGHT SAFETY ENSURED?

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- The return of NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Barry Wilmore from ISS has underscored the importance of strict safety protocols.
- As ISRO prepares for Gaganyaan, safety at all mission stages from launch to re-entry is critical and rooted in global best practices.
- **Emergency Launch Safety**
- ISRO's Gaganyaan will use a crew escape system (CES) mounted on a tower above the module, unlike satellite-launch vehicles.
- In emergencies, this system will eject the module with high thrust to a safe distance from the rocket.
- Post-ejection, parachutes deploy to ensure safe splashdown in the sea. Abort Scenarios
- Multiple types of abort protocols are planned depending on when the malfunction occurs:
- Before liftoff
- After ignition but before launch
- During ascent Launch Vehicle Design
- Gaganyaan will be launched aboard LVM3, modified to ensure high reliability and abort safety.
- A dedicated solid fuel-powered CES ensures astronauts can eject in milliseconds if needed.

THE APPROACH TO REGULATING AI IN INDIA

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- India has no official AI policy or legislation yet, unlike several countries like the U.S., U.K., China, and EU nations.
- The NITI Aayog's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (2018) remains a guidance document with no formal endorsement from the Government of India.
- **Focus of India's Efforts**
- Efforts are focused on promoting AI development, but without binding governance frameworks.
- An advisory group is working on AI governance recommendations, though clarity is lacking on whether these will be formally adopted.
- Global Comparisons and Lessons
- The EU's GDPR and China's Personal Information Protection Law offer centralised and comprehensive frameworks.
- The U.S. follows a more sector-specific, decentralised approach.
- India must balance rapid AI adoption with safeguards against:
 - Discrimination and exclusion
 - Cybersecurity risks and privacy breaches
 - Lack of algorithmic transparency

WHAT IS U.S FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION'S ANTITRUST CASE AGAINST META

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- FTC sued Meta (2020) for anti-competitive acquisitions of Instagram (2012) and WhatsApp (2014).
- FTC aims to prove Meta's monopoly in the PSN market, potentially leading to divestiture.
- Meta argues PSN market includes TikTok, YouTube, and others, denying monopoly status.
- Case reflects global concerns about Big Tech dominance.
- Antitrust Laws: Regulations to prevent monopolies and promote competition, enforced in the U.S. by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

- **Monopoly:** Market dominance by a single firm, restricting competition (e.g., Meta's control over social networking).

AI CAN SUPERCHARGE FORECASTING IF IT CAN WEATHER SOME CHALLENGES

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- AI/ML models are being used in India to improve forecasting of heatwaves, heavy rainfall, and floods.
- Traditional models rely on physics-based simulations, while AI models learn from data to predict weather outcomes.
- Two major challenges: availability of clean and large datasets and shortage of domain skilled professionals.
- The 'Mausam Mission' and the Centre for Excellence in AI at IITM are key steps to modernise weather prediction.
- AI can help generate faster, region-specific, and computationally lighter forecasts, aiding disaster preparedness.

STUDY REPORTS LIPIDS ALSO GUIDE EVOLUTION NOT JUST DNA PROTEINS

SUBJECT: SCIENCE

- A new study suggests that lipids, not just DNA and proteins, play a significant role in evolution and cell function.
- Lipids can form 30% of cell dry weight, yet are often reduced to passive "shells" in textbook biology.
- The study focused on the Respiratory Complex I (RCI), showing how lipid protein co-evolution is essential for mitochondrial function.
- Lipids not only support protein assembly but also influence structural flexibility, enzyme efficiency, and adaptation to stress like drought and heat.
- The findings may reshape our understanding of cell biology, and have pharmaceutical implications, especially in cholesterol regulation and mitochondrial disorders.
- Conventional science emphasized DNA (genetic code) and proteins (functional molecules) in evolution.

- Lipids were seen as inert barriers or packaging material in cell membranes.
- However, evidence now suggests lipids interact dynamically with proteins and influence evolution.

A CHANCE FOR INDIA'S CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM TO MAKE WAVES

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- India possesses significant demographic and technological advantages to become a global hub for the media and entertainment(M&E) industry.
- Initiatives like the World Audio-Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES)2025 in Mumbai aim to foster this growth by attracting investors and showcasing Indian creativity.
- India's rich storytelling tradition, diverse arts, and technological advancements in areas like VFX and animation are key strengths.
- The government is also actively supporting the M&E sector to drive innovation and create a dynamic ecosystem.
- The convergence of technology and creativity is opening new avenues in immersive media like VR, AR, and the metaverse.

ISRO'S SECOND SHORT HOT TEST OF SEMICRYOGENIC ENGINE A SUCCESS

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- ISRO conducted a successful short-duration hot test of the semicryogenic engine at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, on April 24, 2025.
- Second test after the first on March 28, 2025; lasted 3.5 seconds, achieving 60% of rated power.
- Tests validate engine design integrity (e.g., turbo pumps, control systems).
- Engine Power Head Test Article includes all engine systems; ignited and operated successfully.
- Paves way for semicryogenic engine integration into ISRO's launch vehicles (e.g., GSLV-F16).

INDIA AI COMPUTE CONUNDRUM

SUBJECT: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- India AI Mission aims to subsidize 40% of compute costs for priority sectors (healthcare, education).
- Bidding process favors lowest price, risking quality; 25% of Nvidia H100 chips underutilized.
- Focus on quality via user qualification criteria; allocate ₹4,500 crore for compute pillar.
- Long-term: Build sovereign compute infrastructure to reduce dependency on foreign models(e.g., US, EU, China)

SOCIAL ISSUES

ENSURE EDUCATION, HYGIENE, HEALTHCARE IN RURAL AREAS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- SC dismissed a plea to direct States to set up public libraries in every village.
- Justice Surya Kant emphasized basic amenities like hygiene, education, and healthcare must take precedence in rural infrastructure.
- Libraries are important but not the most urgent rural requirement. Budgetary Allocation Direction
- Court stated that 10%–15% of States' budgets must be earmarked for basic rural infrastructure to realize development goals. Perspective on Libraries
- Libraries help spread constitutional and civic values but are secondary to urgent needs like mid-day meals, water, and schooling infrastructure. India-specific Angle
- SC urged States to prioritize as per local realities, considering both constitutional literacy and ground-level needs.
- Emphasized need for policy discretion by States, not judicial imposition on budget decisions

A PEOPLE STILL WAITING TO MOVE OUT OF THE MARGINS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Despite the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, implementation is weak.
- Only 15,800 ID cards issued out of 24,115 applications till Dec 2023.
- Systemic issues: bureaucratic delays, social stigma, lack of anti harassment frameworks.
- **Barriers in Employment & Finance** 48% transgender unemployment rate (vs national avg. 7-8%).
- Bias in hiring, lack of facilities, financial exclusion persists despite some reforms (e.g. Tata Steel hiring, Finance Ministry allowing joint bank accounts in 2024).
- **Access to Education & Health** Transgender literacy rate: 56.1% (2011 Census).
- Dropout due to bullying, limited transgender cells in colleges (exceptions: Maharashtra, Kerala).
- Health systems lack trained staff, gender-affirming clinics, and mental health support.
- **Mainstreaming Efforts & Media Representation** – Need for deeper media campaigns (e.g. I Am Also Human, Kovagam Festival), workplace sensitisation, and inclusive curriculum.
- Social inclusion hinges on changing perception, targeted financial support, and policy enforcement.

HEALTH AND SANITATION AS THE PILLARS OF A HEALTHY INDIA

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).
- **SBM Impact:** ODF status by 2019, averted over 3 lakh diarrhoeal deaths (WHO), improved safety for women, reduced groundwater contamination.
- **JJM Impact:** Over 80% rural households have tap water, potential to avert 4 lakh diarrhoeal deaths (WHO), time saved for women, increased women's participation in economic activities.
- **Sujal and Swachh Gaon Campaign:** Integrates water, sanitation, and hygiene at the village level.

- **Women's Role:** Water testers, sanitation entrepreneurs, local leaders.
- **Convergence:** Inter-ministerial collaboration is crucial for public health outcomes.

NCDs CAN STRIKE EARLY, HEALTH RISKS RISE POST MENOPAUSE SAYS REPORT

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- NCDs are increasingly affecting children and adolescents, as revealed by a recent screening of students. Obesity, pre-hypertension, and high blood glucose levels were observed.
- **Post-Menopausal Risks:** Women face significantly increased risks of diabetes, obesity, fatty liver, and hypertension after menopause.
- **The Need:** Comprehensive health management strategies are crucial throughout life, especially for women post-menopause.

RGI FLAGS DELAY BY HOSPITALS IN REPORTING BIRTHS, DEATHS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- The Registrar-General of India (RGI) issued a circular on March 17, highlighting delays by hospitals (both private and government) in reporting births and deaths within the mandatory 21 day period under the Registration of Birth and Death (RBD) Act, 1969.
- **Current Status:** 90% of births and deaths are registered, but the goal of 100% universal registration remains unmet due to non-compliance by hospitals.
- **Violations Observed:** Hospitals wait for relatives to request registration or direct them to report events themselves.
- Some private hospitals fail to report events to the concerned registrar.
- **Legal Implications:** Under Section 23(2) of the RBD Act, negligence in registration is punishable with a fine.
- Registrars often delay entering events into the online portal, causing inconvenience to citizens.

- Birth and death certificates must be issued within 7 days, as per RGI guidelines.
- **Importance of Timely Registration:** With the Census delayed since 2021, civil registration records are crucial for estimating population and updating the National Population Register (NPR), ration cards, property registration, and electoral rolls

THE ISSUE WITH DELIMITATIONS POPULATION BASED PROCESS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Delimitation governed by Articles 82 and 170; seats frozen till 2026 based on 1971 Census.
- Serious concerns over population-based seat reallocation creating regional disparities.
- Southern states with successful population control may lose representation.
- Northern states (e.g., UP, Bihar) could gain more seats, skewing national balance.
- **Representation vs. Population** – Larger populations don't always need proportionate increase in seats.
- Smaller constituencies may ensure better public service and accountability.

LAND HOLDING FARMERS DOING NON – FARMING ACTIVITIES HELPS EFFICIENCY

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Farmers with land holdings who engage in non-farming activities tend to improve labor efficiency on their farms.
- ICRISAT data from 2010-2014 across multiple states was used. Data envelopment analysis was employed to estimate labor use efficiency.
- Migrating farmers bring back new knowledge and practices.
- Non-farm income allows for hiring labor during farmers' absence.
- **Recommendations:** Promote structured non-farm employment in rural areas.
- Government support for farmers diversifying into non-farm activities is needed.

DEFINITION OF WOMAN IS BASED ON BIOLOGICAL SEX: UK COURT

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- U.K. Supreme Court (unanimous): "Woman" and "sex" in Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex.
- Outcome of 6-year battle between For Women Scotland (FWS) and Scottish government.
- FWS challenged inclusion of transwomen in "woman" for public board representation.
- Scottish guidance (Gender Recognition Certificate defines "woman") ruled incorrect.
- Victory for biological sex-based gender definition; blow to trans rights.
- Trans people protected under "gender reassignment" but not acquired gender.
- Likely impacts hospitals, sports, shelters across U.K.

MAKING PRIMARY HEALTH CARE VISIBLE ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Modern public health challenges include AMR (antimicrobial resistance), non-communicable diseases (NCDs), zoonotic diseases, and mental health issues.
- Shift needed from treating only diseases to a system that addresses social determinants of health, health-seeking behavior, and community interaction.
- **Ayushman Bharat Programme (2018)**
- A transformative initiative with 3 key arms:
- **PM-JAY:** Largest public health insurance, covering secondary & tertiary hospitalization for 50 crore people.
- **Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs):** Aim to deliver comprehensive primary healthcare at grassroots.
- **PM-ABHIM:** Infrastructure mission to bolster public health facilities.
- **Healthcare Access & Budget Reality**

- As of Nov 2021, 1.75 lakh AB-HWCs operational, yet average annual outpatient consultations per centre is low.
- National Health Accounts (2021-22): Public spending as share of GDP increased marginally, without-of-pocket expenditure still high.
- **Healthcare workforce gaps:** 40% of PHCs lack doctors; 70% lack laboratory technicians.
- **People's Trust & Health-Seeking Behavior**
- Many prefer private sector due to perceived quality and ease.
- Need to strengthen trust in public health system through consistent care, accessible infrastructure, and community engagement.

ARBITRARY TAKEDOWN ORDERS ON WIKIPEDIA WILL STIFLE FLOW OF INFORMATION

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Supreme Court overturned Delhi High Court's directive to Wikimedia to take down a Wikipedia article based on a defamation case filed by Asian News International (ANI).
- The HC had called the Wikipedia page defamatory due to references that were allegedly editorials/opinionated, placing a "higher responsibility" on Wikipedia.
- **Supreme Court's Stand**
- Observed that: HC's takedown direction was too broad.
- Removing all false/misleading content could punish the open, user-driven model of Wikipedia.
- Directed ANI to file a specific plea for removal of identified defamatory content.
- Wikipedia as an Internet Intermediary
Wikipedia enjoy safe harbour under IT laws: Content is created/moderated by users.
- Wikimedia Foundation is not the primary publisher.
- Broad takedown orders threaten the model of collaborative editing.

- Community-Driven Safeguards Wikipedia uses: Extended confirmed protection
- Administrator oversight
- Community-elected editors based on reputation/history
- Ensures high content reliability despite open access.

RECORD REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN CIVIL SERVICES

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- 2023 IAS batch has 41% women (74 officers), the highest ever.
- Women's representation aligns with Modi government's inclusive governance agenda.
- IAS training includes attachments to Central Ministries for policy exposure.
- SDG 5 emphasizes gender equality in leadership roles.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO EAT WELL MUST BEGIN IN SCHOOL

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- The United Nations General Assembly's Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) emphasizes the need for global efforts to end all forms of malnutrition.
- A key aspect is addressing the nutritional needs of children from their first 1,000 days through adolescence.
- Experts advocate for integrating comprehensive nutrition education into the school curriculum from the pre-school level onwards.
- This education should cover healthy food choices, dietary diversity, understanding food systems, and the impact of food on health and the environment.
- Schools can play a vital role in shaping lifelong healthy eating habits and addressing the rising burden of malnutrition and diet-related diseases. Poor dietary habits are linked to various health problems, including malnutrition, obesity, and chronic diseases.

- Early nutrition education can help children make informed food choices, reducing their susceptibility to these issues.
- Schools can create supportive environments by providing healthy meals, offering cooking lessons, and involving families in nutrition initiatives.

ROLE IN A RISK SOCIETY : HOW WOMEN BEAR A DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN

SUBJECT: SOCIAL ISSUES

- Ulrich Beck's theory of "Risk Society" describes a shift from an industrial society to one increasingly shaped by technological and environmental hazards.
- Events like Chernobyl disaster, COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change expose how modern risks disproportionately impact vulnerable groups.
- Women bear a heavier burden due to inequalities in access to healthcare, education, economic resources, and safety
- Highlights the intersection of gender, environment, and economic vulnerability.
- Urges the need for gender-sensitive disaster management and climate resilience policies.
- Reveals how systemic inequalities intensify the impact of modern global risks.
- Emphasizes building inclusive frameworks in risk governance and development planning

STATES

T.N ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON RETRIEVAL OF KATCHATHEEVU

SUBJECT: STATES

- Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted a resolution on the retrieval of Katchatheevu island on Wednesday.
- **Chief Proponent:** The resolution was moved by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin.
- **Retrieval of Katchatheevu:** The resolution calls for the Union government to take steps to retrieve Katchatheevu from Sri Lanka.
- **Reasoning:** The retrieval is viewed as the only permanent solution to protect the

traditional fishing rights of Tamil Nadu fishermen.

- **Review of 1974 Agreement:** The resolution urges the Central government to review the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of 1974 which ceded the island to Sri Lanka.
- **Call for Diplomatic Action:** Prime Minister's Role: It demands that the Prime Minister raise the issue during his upcoming visit to Sri Lanka, specifically seeking the release of imprisoned Tamil Nadu fishermen and their impounded boats on a goodwill basis.
- **Ongoing Fishermen Issues:** Sri Lankan Navy Attacks: Continuous attacks on Tamil Nadu fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy, including arrests and boat seizures, have been a recurring issue.
- **Political Discontent:** Despite Sri Lanka's political changes, the problems for Tamil Nadu fishermen persist.
- **Modi's 2014 Promise:** CM Stalin reminded that PM Modi had promised no fishermen would be arrested if BJP came to power, but attacks have continued.

TN. MOVED RESOLUTION AGAINST DELIMITATION TO PROTECT STATE AUTONOMY

SUBJECT: STATES

- Criticized Centre's move toward "unitary culture."
- Opposed "One Nation, One Election, One Culture" as authoritarian and fascist.
- Asserted the resolution aims to preserve the federal spirit of the Constitution.
- **Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan:** Said Indian Constitution had strong centralizing features due to Partition era violence.
- Article 356's overuse belied Ambedkar's hope that it would be rarely used.
- Opposed UGC's draft rules for excluding State role in higher education

INCONCLUSIVE CHAPTER

SUBJECT: STATES

- President Murmu withheld assent to Tamil Nadu's anti-NEET bill, reigniting the debate over NEET-based admissions.

- **Tamil Nadu's Stance:** The state wants to conduct medical admissions based on Class 12 board exam scores. They've attempted to legislate against NEET multiple times, but these efforts have been unsuccessful.
- **Central Government & Supreme Court:** The Union government and Supreme Court support NEET.
- **The Way Forward:** Tamil Nadu has limited legal options and should focus on helping students prepare for NEET effectively while continuing the legal battle.

KERALA TO BE DECLARED FIRST STATE TO ACHIEVE TOTAL DIGITAL LITERACY

SUBJECT: STATES

- 'Digi Kerala' by Local Self-Government Department.
- Over 21 lakh people, including senior citizens, trained in digital skills.
- **Examples:** C. Sarasu (67, Thiruvananthapuram): Uses video calls, YouTube.
- Krishnakumar (75, Muvattupuzha): Mobilizes anti-drug campaigns via WhatsApp

ENSURING A FAIR FEDERAL BALANCE

SUBJECT: STATES

- Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin announced the formation of a high-level committee to review the Constitution and recommend steps for ensuring State autonomy.
- The article accuses the Union government, especially under the BJP, of centralising powers and undermining federal principles.
- Examples include overreach in State List subjects, misuse of Governor and President's constitutional powers, and delayed assent to NEET and education-related bills.
- Tamil Nadu is pushing for a renewed struggle to reclaim State rights, echoing the Rajamannar Committee (1971) set up by DMK.
- **Historical Roots of Dravidian Federalism:** DMK's ideology is rooted in the concept of

"Self-rule for States" and resisting central dominance.

- C.N. Annadurai and M. Karunanidhi championed greater devolution of powers through legislative and constitutional reforms.

NOMINATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO LOCAL BODIES IS A PIONEERING MOVE

SUBJECT: STATES

- Tamil Nadu Assembly has passed two Bills to guarantee nomination of persons with disabilities to local bodies.
- Once enacted, 650 posts in urban local bodies, 12,913 in village panchayats, 388 in panchayat unions, and 37 in district panchayats will be reserved for persons with disabilities.
- This is India's first structured move toward ensuring political representation for the disabled at grassroots level.
- **Static Linkages:** 73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendments: Panchayati Raj and Urban Local Bodies.
- PWD Act, 1995 → RPWD Act, 2016: Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Affirmative Action: Social justice through political reservation.
- Article 243D & 243T: Reservation in Panchayats/Municipalities.

SERIOUS FRAUD INVESTIGATION OFFICE

SUBJECT: STATES

- The Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) has named Veena Vijayan, daughter of Kerala CM, as an accused in a ₹2.78 crore corporate fraud.
- She allegedly colluded with Cochin Minerals & Rutile Ltd. (CMRL) and misrepresented payments as IT consultancy fees.
- Her now-defunct firm Exalogic Solutions Pvt Ltd., reportedly a one person company, had no active business or IT product.
- Monthly payments from CMRL (₹5 lakh retainer + ₹3 lakh via Exalogic) were made with little or no real IT services delivered.

- The case stems from transactions between 2017–18 and 2018–19 and includes bank transfers allegedly lacking commercial justification.
- The Kerala High Court has stayed proceedings in the case for two months on a petition filed by CMRL

TWO T.N MINISTERS QUIT ON STRONG COURT REMARKS

SUBJECT: STATES

- Tamil Nadu Forest Minister K. Ponmudy and Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Minister V. Senthilbalaji resigned following strong court observations.
- Supreme Court indicated Senthilbalaji must choose between being a Minister and retaining his personal freedom.
- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin recommended their resignation acceptance and induction of Mano Thangaraj into the Cabinet.
- Portfolios reassigned: Milk and Dairy Development to R.S. Rajakannappan, Transport to S.S. Sivasankar, and Prohibition and Excise to S. Muthusamy.
- Senthilbalaji's resignation marks his second exit after previous arrest and legal troubles related to money laundering.