

NOVEMBER 2024

Articulate

An Initiative by Takshashila
School Of Civil Services

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UPSC CSE

Supreme Court Guidelines on
"Bulldozer Culture"

Donald Trump Win
U.S. Presidential Election

Assessment of the India-Middle
East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)

Chhattisgarh's Barnawapara
Wildlife Sanctuary

LignoSat: World's First
Wood-Panelled Satellite



Contents

Polity and Governance

	9
● Parliament	9
○ Winter Session of Parliament 2024 Begins	9
● Rights	9
○ UK's Terminally-ill Adults (End of Life) Bill	9
○ Spousal Privacy is a Fundamental Right: Madras High Court	10
● Judiciary	11
○ Supreme Court upholds the Constitutional Validity of UP Madarsa Act, 2004	11
○ Supreme Court Verdict on Religious Conversions	12
○ Madras High Court Upholds Compensation To Muslim Wife	12
○ Member of Religious Congregations Not Exempt from Income tax: SC	13
○ Supreme Court Guidelines on "Bulldozer Culture"	13
○ SC Overrules 1967 Verdict That Removed AMU's Minority Tag	14
○ Government Permission Required for Prosecution of Public Servants in PMLA: SC	16
○ Amendment to the Supreme Court Rules, 2013	16
● Elections	16
○ Donald Trump Wins U.S. Presidential Election	16
● Center-state relation/federalism	17
○ Gujarat Forms State Finance Commission as per 15th Finance Commission's Recommendation	17
● Governance	18
○ Andhra Pradesh Repeals Two-Child Policy Amid Demographic Concerns	18
○ Central government announced PAN 2.0 as a 'common business identifier'	18
○ Atal Mission's Next Phase is approved by the Cabinet	20
○ Cabinet approved the "One Nation One Subscription" (ONOS) scheme	21
○ Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2024 (RPwD Rules)	22
○ Income Limit for OBC/EWS	22
○ Jeevan Pramaan (Digital Life Certificate for Pensioners)	23
○ Karimganj District to be Renamed as Sribhumi	23
○ Contribution of Women Members in the Constituent Assembly	24
○ National and State Women's Commission	25
● Probable MCQs	25

Economy	29
● Balance of Payment & International Trade	29
○ The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and the Common Reporting Standard (CRS)	29
○ Government plans to make Andaman and Nicobar a Tuna export hub	29
○ RBI introduces new guidelines for FPI to FDI reclassification	30
○ U.S. Imposed Sanctions On Indian Companies	30
○ Assessment of the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)	31
○ US Federal Reserve's Interest Rate Cut and Impact on India	32
● Sectors of the Economy, GDP, Inflation	33
○ Tractor Tax: Inheritance Tax on Agricultural Assets in England	33
○ Milk, Meat, and Egg production increased in 2023-24: Centre	33
○ Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)	34
○ State of Food and Agriculture 2024: FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization)	35
● Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Energy Resources	35
○ Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme	35
○ Indonesia Inaugurated Southeast Asia's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant in Purwakarta	35
○ EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) compliance Relief for Coffee Planters in India	36
○ Ministry of Mines Initiates First-Ever Auction of Offshore Mineral Blocks	36
○ Uniform Protection Protocol by Central Electricity Authority	37
○ Dedicated Freight Corridors	38
○ Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue	38
● Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Energy Resources	39
○ UGC Introduces Flexible Degree Completion Options	39
○ China Revamps Population Policy	40
○ Rise in Women's Workforce Participation	40
○ State of the World's Children 2024 Annual Report: UNICEF	40
○ World Bank Report on Healthy Longevity (2024)	41
○ Debranning Reduces Health Benefits of Millets: Study	41
○ PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme to provide financial support for higher education	42
○ Decline in Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditure in India	43
○ The First Digital Population Clock of Bengaluru installed at ISEC	43
● Probable MCQs	43

IR Defence and Security	47
● International organisation, Conferences, Agreements	47
○ Historic Visit by the Prime Minister of India to Nigeria	47
○ Arrest warrants against Israeli PM Netanyahu by International Criminal Court (ICC)	48
○ Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty by G20	48
○ India Bids for the 2036 Olympics	49
○ Constitutional Amendment in Turkey to Extend President's Term	49
○ Canada's Student Direct Stream (SDS) programme	50
○ ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024	50
○ Russia's new nuclear doctrine	51
● Defense and Internal Security	51
○ France Evaluating the Pinaka Rocket System in India	51
○ First Ever Space Exercise 'Antariksha Abhyas - 2024' in New Delhi	52
○ The fourth edition of Exercise 'Sea Vigil-24'	52
○ Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) Missiles	53
○ India successfully tests its first long-range hypersonic Missile	53
○ Indian Army Receives Sabal-20 Logistics Drones For Use In Eastern Sector	54
○ UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) Mast for Naval Ships	54
● Probable MCQs	54
Geography and Environment	58
● Physical Geography	58
○ Salt Chimneys in the Dead Sea	58
○ Hurricane Rafael and Typhoon Kong-Rey	58
○ Redevelopment of Hyderabad's Musi Riverfront	59
● Environment Conservation	59
○ Elephant Deaths in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, MP	59
○ Outcomes of COP-16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Held in Cali, Colombia	60
○ Chhattisgarh's New Tiger Reserve: Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla	61
○ India Signed the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement	61
○ Categorization of Industrial Sectors by CPCB	62
○ Chhattisgarh's Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary	62
○ India's Rising Carbon Emissions	63
○ Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), 2024	63
● Pollution	64
○ Categorization of Industrial Sectors by CPCB	64

○ Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)	64
○ Ashtamudi Lake faces severe pollution from untreated sewage	65
○ Delhi Government Appeals for Cloud-Seeding to Combat Air Pollution Crisis	66
○ Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)	66
● Flora and Fauna	67
○ First-Ever Sighting of Eurasian Otter in Pune	67
○ Red-Headed Vulture Spotted First Time in Kasaragod, Kerala	68
○ 'Ophiophagus kaalinga', Scientific Name For The Kalinga Sarpa	69
○ African Penguins Could Be Extinct By 2035: Study	69
● Probable MCQs	69
Science and Technology	73
● Space Technology	73
○ LignoSat: World's First Wood-Panelled Satellite	73
○ MACE: Highest Imaging Cherenkov Telescope in the World in Hanle, Ladakh	73
○ Discovery of Black Hole Triple	74
● Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence	74
○ India Shines in Network Readiness Index 2024	74
○ 6GHz Spectrum	75
○ India Launches First AI Data Bank	75
● Biotechnology	76
○ RNA Editing	76
○ Applications of Intelligent bacteria	77
● Health	77
○ Global Tuberculosis Report 2024 released by WHO	77
○ Role of Mini-Protein in Cancer Treatment	78
○ Diabetic Drug Semaglutide	78
○ Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic (CKM) Syndrome	79
○ 'Know Your Medicine (KYM)' App by NADA	79
○ Hydrogels	80
● Daily Applications of Technology	80
○ Patent Evergreening	80
○ Hotspot Technology in Cricket	82
● Probable MCQs	83
History and Culture	86
● Karnataka's Foundation Day Celebration with Yakshagana	86

● Thadou community in Manipur	87
● Scientifically Validated Societal Traditional Knowledge (SVASTIK) Initiative	88
● 150th Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda	88
● 1st Bodoland Mohotsav Celebrated in New Delhi	89
● Maori Haka Dance	89
● Indira Gandhi Peace Prize, 2023 Winners: Daniel Barenboim & Ali Abu Awwad	90
● Rock-cut footprints and a human figure discovered from at Kanhirapoil in Kerala	90
● Birth Anniversary of Lachit Borphukan: Army General of Ahom Kingdom	91
● Cia-Cia Language: Indonesia	91
● Samis, Kvens and Forest Finns	92
● Dhudmaras village, Chattisgarh	92
● Yadagirigutta in Nalgonda district, Telangana	92
● This Day In History	93
● Probable MCQs	96
PIN-GK	99
● Places in News	99
● Person in News	101
● Book in News	103

POLITY IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

PARLIAMENT

RIGHTS

JUDICIARY

ELECTIONS

CENTRE-STATE RELATION/FEDERALISM

GOVERNANCE

Parliament

Winter Session of Parliament 2024 Begins

About the Sessions of Parliament:

- **Article 85** of the Indian Constitution grants the **President** the power to summon or prorogue the sessions of the Lok Sabha (the Lower House of Parliament).
 - The **Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs** decides the dates for Parliament sessions, which are then formalized by the President, who summons the MPs to meet.
 - There cannot be more than six months between the last sitting of one session and the first sitting of the next session.
- **Parliamentary Sessions in India:** India does not follow a fixed parliamentary calendar, but **by convention (not mentioned in the constitution)**, Parliament meets for **three sessions** every year:
 - **Budget Session:** The longest session, typically starting in late January and concluding by April or early May.
 - ◆ This session includes a recess period for parliamentary committees to discuss budget proposals.
 - **Monsoon Session:** Usually held from July to August.
 - **Winter Session:** Held from November to December.

Why in News?

The winter session of the Parliament of India began in November 2024.

Rights

UK's Terminally-ill Adults (End of Life) Bill

Provisions of the Bill:

- **Purpose:** The bill allows terminally ill patients in the UK to request '**assistance**' to end their life.
 - **Assisted dying** is the process by which a patient can end their own life with the assistance of a doctor.
 - **Comparison with India:** India recognizes '**passive euthanasia**' (withdrawal of life support) under specific conditions, but does not allow '**active euthanasia**'.
- **2018:** The Supreme Court in India recognised the right to die with dignity as a fundamental right (Article 21) and prescribed guidelines for terminally ill patients to enforce the right.
 - **2023:** The Supreme Court modified the guidelines to make the right to die with dignity more accessible.

Why in News?

The House of Commons in november 2024, voted in favour of the **Terminally ill Adults (End of Life) Bill**.

Spousal Privacy is a Fundamental Right: Madras High Court



Key Points:

- **What is Spousal Privacy:** Spousal privacy is the right of married partners to keep certain communications and personal information between them private and protected from disclosure.
- **Madras High Court Ruling:** The Court ruled that evidence gathered by violating spousal privacy cannot be used as evidence in legal proceedings.
 - The ruling builds on the 2017 Supreme Court judgment in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India, which recognized privacy as a fundamental right.
 - The Madras High Court's interpretation extends this right to include privacy within marital relationships.

Impact and Hypothetical Cases	Scenario	Outcome
Confession to Spouse	A husband admits to his wife that he has stolen money.	The wife's testimony or evidence derived from this private communication cannot be used against the husband, as it violates spousal privacy.
Recording Spousal Conversations	A spouse secretly records their partner's admission of a crime.	The recording would be inadmissible in court due to the violation of spousal privacy.

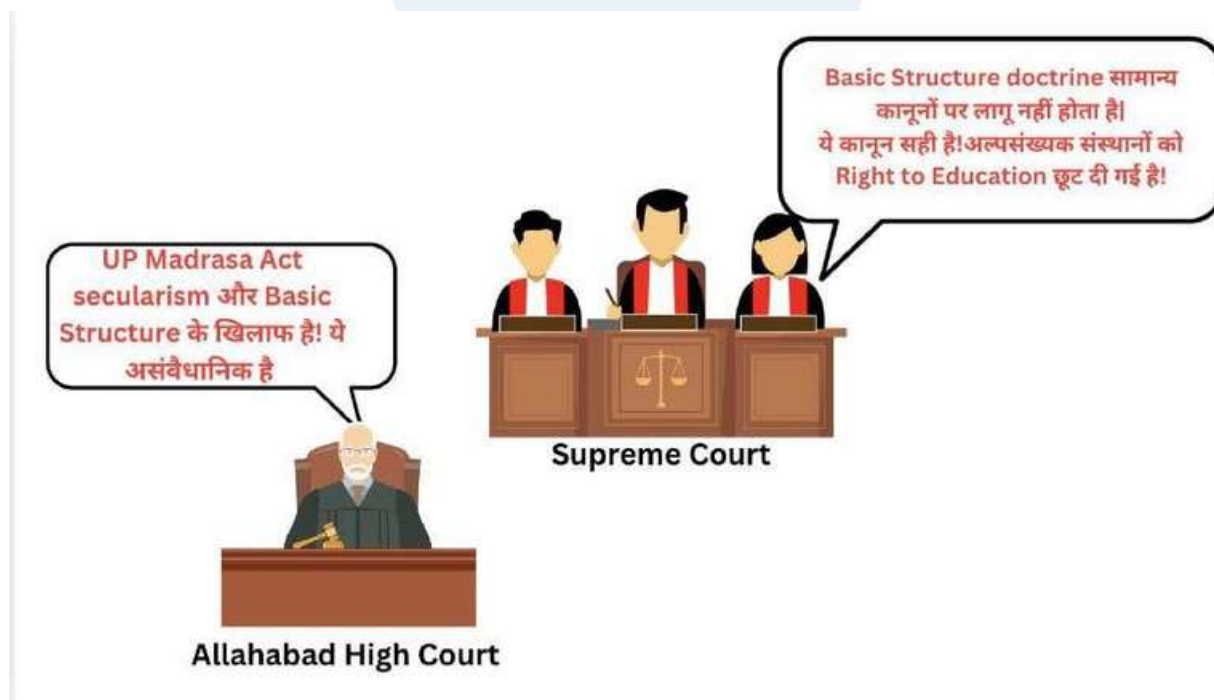
Private Letters or Messages	A wife retrieves private letters or messages from her husband's phone and presents them in court.	Such evidence would not be admissible, as it breaches the protected zone of spousal communication.
Physical Evidence Discovered via Spouse	A spouse reveals the location of hidden stolen goods based on private communication.	If the discovery of physical evidence relies directly on breached spousal communication, it could be challenged as inadmissible.

Why in News?

The Madras High Court has said that “privacy is a fundamental right that includes spousal privacy, and any evidence collected by breaking this right is not admissible in court.”

Judiciary

Supreme Court upholds the Constitutional Validity of UP Madarsa Act, 2004



- **2004:** The Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act was enacted to regulate Madarsa education in the state.
- **March 22, 2024:** The Allahabad High Court struck down the Uttar Pradesh Madarsa Act, claiming it violated secularism (a part of the **Basic Structure doctrine**) and **Article 21A**, which guarantees the Right to Education.
- **2024:** The Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgment in the case of **Anjum Qadri and Anr v. Union of India & Ors.** which:

- Overturned the Allahabad High Court's decision and upheld the constitutionality of the Madarsa Act.
- Clarified that the **Basic Structure doctrine does not apply to ordinary laws** like the Madarsa as per **Indira Nehru Gandhi v. Raj Narain** case (1975).
- Reaffirmed that **secularism** ensures equal treatment of all religions and that Madarsa safeguard minority educational rights without violating secular principles.
- Rejected claims that Madarsa education violated **Article 21A** by citing the **2014 Pramati Trust judgment** , which exempted minority institutions from the **RTE Act**.
 - ◆ The Supreme Court ruled in the **Pramati Trust Case (2014)** that **minority institutions are exempt from the application of the Right to Education (RTE) Act**.

Why in News?

The Supreme Court in November 2024 upheld the constitutional validity of the Uttar Pradesh **Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004**.

Supreme Court Verdict on Religious Conversions

Case Background:

- The petitioner had applied for a government job under the Scheduled Caste as he had reverted to Hinduism, following its customs, to regain SC benefits. Although, she was baptised as a Christian at birth and had practised Christianity throughout her life.

Key points of SC judgment:

- Converting to religions like Christianity leads to the loss of caste identity.
- To regain caste status, individuals must genuinely return to Hinduism with community acceptance.
- Conversions should be based on sincere belief, not to gain reservation benefits.
- Fraudulent caste claims undermine the reservation system meant to help disadvantaged groups.

Why in News?

The Supreme Court of India ruled that religious conversions made solely to gain quota benefits, without genuine belief, are a **"fraud on the Constitution."**

Madras High Court Upholds Compensation To Muslim Wife

Key Points of Madras HC Judgement:

- A Muslim woman is entitled to claim damages/compensation from her **bigamous** husband since his act would amount to inflicting mental harm on her and it falls under the definition of the term **'domestic violence'** under the **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005**.

- **Bigamy** refers to the act of marrying someone while still being legally married to another person.
- The court also observed that **Shariat councils** are private bodies, and thus, cannot adjudicate divorce matters.
 - Only **state-authorized courts have the legal authority** to handle such cases

Why in News?

Madras HC in November 2024 passed a verdict on a petition related to the compensation to be paid by Muslim man to his second wife.

Member of Religious Congregations Not Exempt from Income tax: SC

Key Points:

- **Background:**
 - **2014:** The Income Tax Department directed educational authorities and district treasury officers to affect Tax Deducted at Source from members of religious congregations receiving salaries from the government.
 - **2019:** Petitions were filed against the 2014 order as the petitioners argued that priests, and nuns from religious segregation do not live a daily civil life
 - **2024:** The Supreme Court ruled that salaried nuns are not exempt from income tax, stating that anyone earning a salary must pay taxes.

About Religious Congregations:

Religious Congregations are groups of men or women who have chosen to express their Christian commitment by living in the community and taking lifelong vows – usually vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Supreme Court Guidelines on “Bulldozer Culture”

Background:

- The case involved pleas challenging the practice of demolishing houses of people accused of crimes, which was considered “extra-legal.”
 - “Extralegal” means something that is not authorized by law or is outside the boundaries of legal rules and procedures
- This practice has been observed in states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Rajasthan.

Guidelines of Supreme Court on ‘Bulldozer Justice’:

- A **15-day notice must be given before any demolition**, detailing the unauthorized construction.
- Occupants must be provided with an opportunity to contest demolition actions.

- Demolitions must be **recorded on video for accountability**.
- **Public Officials Accountable**: Officials ignoring these guidelines will face contempt, prosecution, and liability for restoring properties.
- **Statement on Due Process**: The Court ruled **demolitions without due process violate natural justice** and undermine the **rule of law**.

Significance of the verdict

- **Uphold the Principle of Separation of Powers** : Only the judiciary can decide guilt and ensure state bodies don't exceed their limits. The executive cannot replace the judiciary.
- **Rule of Law** : The executive cannot demolish property as punishment without a fair trial. Demolitions that unfairly target specific groups can be challenged as discrimination.
- **Right to Shelter** : Demolishing properties, including those not involved in crime, violates the right to shelter under Article 21.
- **Protection of Property** : Property cannot be taken away without legal process, as stated in Article 300A.
- **Protection of Individual Rights** : The court's focus on due process protects people from unfair actions by the state.

Why in News?

- The **Supreme Court of India condemned** the **"bulldozer culture"** in States where properties of accused individuals are demolished without due process, leaving their families homeless.
- Using its powers under **Article 142** the Court issued strict, binding directives to state authorities overseeing demolitions.

SC Overrules 1967 Verdict That Removed AMU's Minority Tag

Why in News?

A seven-judge Bench of the **Supreme Court laid down in a 4-3 majority verdict a "holistic and realistic" test to determine the "minority character" of an educational institution** but left the factual determination on AMU to a smaller Bench.

Key points of the recent ruling of the Supreme Court:

- **Minority Status Test**: The court set a practical, two-fold test to determine an institution's minority character.
 - The test involves assessing the **institution's origin and its primary purpose of benefiting the minority community**.
- **SC highlighted core minority character under Article 30(1)**:
 - The main purpose of establishing a minority institution is to preserve language and culture, but it need not be the only purpose.

KEY DATES IN AMU's HISTORY, LEGAL CASE

1877: Syed Ahmad Khan establishes Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College for uplifting Muslims.

1920: The MAO College becomes AMU after the AMU Act is enacted.

1950: Parliament declares AMU an institution of national importance.

1951: AMU Act is amended, allowing non-Muslims to be members of the AMU Court, its supreme governing body at the time.

1965: Another amendment expands powers of AMU's Executive Council; University Court is no longer the supreme governing body.

1967: SC rules on challenge to the amendments; says AMU cannot be classified as a minority institution (*Azeez Basha* case).

1981: Indira Gandhi's government amends the AMU Act, declaring AMU was established for the educational, cultural advancement of Muslims.

2005: AMU introduces 50% reservation for Muslim students in postgraduate medical courses.

2006: Allahabad HC quashes the policy and the 1981 amendment. The UPA government and AMU move SC against the verdict.

2016: The central government withdraws from the appeal, saying the UPA government's stand was "against the public policy of reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs/EWSs as applicable to central universities".

2019: Three-judge SC Bench refers the issue to a seven-judge Bench.

- A minority institution will not lose its minority status by admitting non-minority students.
- Secular education can be provided in a minority institution without affecting its minority status.
- Loss of administrative control by the minority community does not affect the institution's minority status.

● Dissenting Opinions:

- Three dissenting judges upheld the 1967 *S. Azeez Basha v Union of India* judgement & rejected AMU's minority status, questioning its establishment by the Muslim community, and called for further investigation.

Protections for Minority Educational Institutes (MEIs):

- Under **Article 30(1)**, all minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- Under **Article 15(5)**, MEIs are exempt from providing reservations for SCs and STs.

Government Permission Required for Prosecution of Public Servants in PMLA: SC

Key Points:

- Section 197(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) **requires government sanction before prosecuting public servants.**
- The recent dispute arose if government sanction is necessary for prosecuting public servants under the PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act) 2002.

Why in News?

The Supreme Court has held that **Prior sanction** is required to prosecute the public servants under PMLA.

Amendment to the Supreme Court Rules, 2013

About New Rules:

- The Chief Justice will determine the schedule for partial court working days and holidays, limited to 95 days excluding Sundays, and notify this in the official gazette.
- Judges may be assigned by the Chief Justice to handle admissions, urgent matters, or other directed issues during partial court working days or holidays.
- The term “vacation judge” has been replaced with “judge” in the amended rules.
- The **Supreme Court’s summer vacation** is now called “**partial court working days.**”

Why in News?

Supreme Court (Second Amendment) Rules, 2024 has been notified to amend the Supreme Court Rules 2013.

Elections

Donald Trump Wins U.S. Presidential Election

Key Points:

- Trump will assume office as the **47th President** of the United States.
- **Previous Term:** He also served as the U.S. President from 2016 to 2020.
- He is the **first president in over 100 years to serve two non-consecutive terms.**



Why in News?

Recently, **Donald Trump from the Republican party won the U.S. presidential election** , defeating Kamala Harris, the Vice President of the United States.

Center-state relation/federalism

Gujarat Forms State Finance Commission as per 15th Finance Commission's Recommendation

Background of the Issue:

- In 2020, the **15th Finance Commission** in its report noted that many states had delayed establishing the 5th or 6th SFCs, which are essential for reviewing Panchayat finances and recommending tax distribution.
- The commission recommended that states which had not set up these constitutional bodies should not receive grants after March 2024.

Key Highlights:

- Gujarat formed its State Finance Commission (SFC) latest, following the recommendation of the 15th Finance Commission.
- All states, except Arunachal Pradesh, now have functioning SFCs.

About State Finance Commission:

- **Article 243-I:** The Constitution requires the Governor to set up a State Finance Commission (SFC) within one year of the 73rd Amendment Act (1992) and every five years afterwards.
- **Objective:** SFC assesses Panchayats' finances and advises on revenue-sharing between the State and Panchayats.

Significance of Formation of SFCs for Local Bodies:

- **Constitutional Mandate:** SFCs are set up under **Article 243-I** of the Constitution to strengthen local governance.
 - They help ensure resources flow to panchayats and urban local bodies, supporting fiscal federalism.
- **Fair Distribution of Resources:** SFCs decide how taxes, duties, tolls, and fees collected by the state should be shared between the state and local bodies.
 - This ensures fair and adequate funding for local institutions.
- **Boosting Local Development:** By providing enough funds, SFCs help local bodies improve infrastructure, education, healthcare, and sanitation. This leads to sustainable and inclusive growth at the community level.

- It also reduces local bodies' dependence on state governments and promotes decentralization

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj highlighted in a note that Gujarat formed its **State Finance Commission (SFC)** following the 15th Finance Commission's recommendation.

Governance

Andhra Pradesh Repeals Two-Child Policy Amid Demographic Concerns

Background:

- The **two-child policy** was introduced after failed population control measures between the **1981** and **1991** censuses.
 - A committee led by **K. Karunakaran** recommended barring individuals with more than two children from holding government posts, from the panchayat level to Parliament.
- Rajasthan adopted the policy in **1992**, followed by **Andhra Pradesh and Haryana in 1994**.
- Later, several states rolled back this policy due to **declining sex ratios** and the **National Population Policy (2000)** focusing on reproductive rights.

Key Concerns in Andhra Pradesh:

- **Low Fertility Rate:** The state's fertility rate **1.5** is below the **national average (2.11)**, raising demographic concerns.
- **Ageing Population:** A growing elderly population affects state productivity.

Why in News?

In November 2024, **Andhra Pradesh** repealed its **two-child policy**, enabling individuals with over two children to **contest local elections**.

Central government announced PAN 2.0 as a 'common business identifier'

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Central government announced the ₹ **1,435-crore PAN 2.0 project to make the permanent account number (PAN)** a '**common business identifier**' for all digital systems of government agencies.

CABINET DECISION

25TH NOVEMBER, 2024

PAN 2.0

- Cabinet approves PAN 2.0 project of the Income Tax Department at a cost of **Rs 1,435 crore**

- **PAN 2.0** enables technology driven transformation of Taxpayer registration services and has significant benefits including:

- Ease of access and speedy service delivery with improved quality
- Single Source of Truth and data consistency
- Eco-friendly processes and cost optimization
- Security and optimization of infrastructure for greater agility



Features	PAN 1.0	PAN 2.0
Objective	Unique Identification Number of Taxation	Common business identifier across government systems.
Use	Limited to the Income Tax Department and related functions.	Integration with multiple government agencies for digital systems.
Integration of Technology	Basic digital services for PAN application and verification.	Advanced technology for seamless registration and service delivery.
Delivery of Services	Traditional processes and extended service timelines in several instances	Faster, technology-enabled workflows delivering enhanced service quality.

- Currently, about 78 crore PANs have been issued, of which 98% are to individuals.

Atal Mission's Next Phase is approved by the Cabinet



About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

- **2016:** Launched by NITI Aayog.
- It is India's **flagship initiative to foster innovation and entrepreneurship.**
- **Aim:** Focused on fostering problem-solving skills and innovative mindsets in schools while building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in universities, research institutions, and the private sector.

Key Initiatives:

- **Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL):** Set up in 10,000 Indian schools (grades 6-12) to inspire innovation through IoT, 3D printing, robotics, and mini electronics.
- **Atal Incubation Centres (AICs):** 72 centers supporting over 3,500 startups with mentorship, funding, and technical resources to promote innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs):** Focused on promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in under-served regions.

Why in News?

Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**, implemented by NITI Aayog, with an enhanced allocation of ₹2,750 crore for the period till **March 31, 2028.**

Cabinet approved the “One Nation One Subscription” (ONOS) scheme

Key Features of the ONOS Scheme:

Unified Access to Journals:

- Over **13,000 journals** from **30 international publishers** will be available to all government higher education institutions, including universities, colleges, and research institutions.
- **Duration:** The scheme will be implemented over three years, from **2025 to 2027**.
- **Managed by INFLIBNET:** The **Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET)**, an autonomous body under the University Grants Commission (UGC), will oversee the national subscription process.
- The scheme will benefit over **6,300 institutions**, including government-run higher education and central research institutions.

Comparison Table:

Aspect	Before ONOS Scheme	After ONOS Scheme
Access to Research Journals	Separate subscriptions for each journal/database.	Unified access to multiple journals and databases via one subscription.
Subscription Costs	High costs due to individual subscriptions.	Reduced costs through a single, centralized subscription.
Coverage of Journals/ Databases	Limited access based on budgets of institutions.	Access to a wide range of national and international resources.
Funding	Reliance on institutional budgets or research grants.	Government funds the centralized subscription.
Access for Institutions	Limited by institutional budgets and location.	Equal access for all institutions, including colleges and universities.
Access for Researchers	Dependent on institutional access or personal subscriptions.	Broader access for researchers, regardless of affiliation.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Union Cabinet approved the ‘One Nation One Subscription’ (ONOS) scheme for access to international research journals by all government-run higher education institutions.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2024 (RPwD Rules)

Key Points:

Aspect	Before Amendment	After Amendment
Rule 17: Application Process	No specific requirement to submit applications through the UDID (Unique Disability ID) portal.	Applications must be submitted through the UDID portal, giving statutory backing to UDID cards.
	Applications could be submitted to any medical authority.	Applications must be made only to the medical authority or notified competent authority in the district.
Rule 18: Issuance of Certificates	Certificates and UDID cards had to be issued within one month.	Certificates and UDID cards must now be issued within three months.
	No provision for voiding applications due to delays.	Applications may be considered void if no decision is made by the medical authority within two years.

Unique Disability ID

- The UDID project initiated by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities**
- It aims at building a holistic end-to-end integrated system for the Issuance of Universal ID & Disability Certificates for Persons with Disabilities with their identification and disability details.

Why in News?

- The government in October 2024 notified the **changes in rules 17 and 18** through the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2024**.

Income Limit for OBC/EWS

Key Points:

- The annual income limit of the family from all sources for the **EWS (Economically Weaker Section)** group of the General category for availing the benefit of reservation is fixed at Rs. 8 lakh.
- The annual parental income limit for the sections of the **Other Backward Classes**, who do not fall with the other conditions prescribed for determination of Creamy Layer, is **Rs. 8 lakh**.
 - The annual income limit for the creamy layer for the **OBCs** was **last revised in the year 2017** and has remained unchanged since then.

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Articles 15(5) and 16(5)** allow the State to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, including reservations in education and government jobs.
- **Articles 15(6) and 16(6)** extend similar provisions for economically weaker sections.
- However, the Constitution does not mandate different criteria for determining economic parity between these groups.

Why in News?

Opposition members in a Parliamentary meeting raised **concerns about OBC candidates facing issues with creamy layer verification** despite clearing the civil services exam.

Jeevan Pramaan (Digital Life Certificate for Pensioners)

About Jeevan Pramaan:

- Jeevan Pramaan is a biometric-enabled digital service for pensioners. Since 2014, the government has been issuing Digital Life Certificates (DLCs), or Jeevan Pramaan.
- **Pensioners of the Central Government, State Government, or any other Government organization can take benefit from this facility.**
- A Pensioner does not have to physically appear before the pension-disbursing authorities – which include banks and post offices – or deliver a paper life certificate to them in the prescribed format.
- Can be generated online anywhere, and is made available directly to the relevant pension-disbursing authority.
- The Jeevan Pramaan portal uses Aadhaar for biometric authentication.

Why in News?

Pensioners in India submit their Digital Life Certificate (DLC) or Jeevan Pramaan every year in November to continue receiving their pensions.

Karimganj District to be Renamed as Sribhumi

Process for Renaming a District

- **Resolution Proposal:** Any MLA can propose a resolution to rename a district.
- **State Assembly Approval:** The resolution is discussed and voted on in the State Assembly. It must pass with a simple majority.
- **Submission to Ministry of Home Affairs:** The approved resolution is sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for consideration.

- **Consultation with Agencies:** The MHA consults various agencies, including:
 - Ministry of Railways, Intelligence Bureau, Department of Posts, Survey of India and Registrar General of India
- **'No Objection' Certificate:** The MHA issues a 'No Objection' certificate if all agencies approve.
- **State Government Notification:** After MHA approval, the state government publishes an official notification in the Gazette to finalize the renaming.

Why in News?

Assam Chief Minister has announced the decision to **rename Karimganj district as Sribhumi to pay tribute to Rabindranath Tagore.**

Contribution of Women Members in the Constituent Assembly

Key points:

- The Constituent Assembly, formed in 1946, was tasked with drafting India's Constitution to establish a democratic framework for independent India.
- **Role of Women:**
 - Among the **299 members, 15 women**, including prominent figures like **Sarojini Naidu, Sucheta Kripalani, and Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit**, as well as lesser-known women from diverse backgrounds, played an active role in debates on gender, caste, and reservations.

Other Women in the Constituent Assembly and Their Contributions	
Name	Background
Ammu Swaminathan	● Advocated for gender equality and opposed widowhood restrictions. Supported the Hindu Code Bill to reform Hindu personal laws.
Annie Mascarene	● Campaigned for universal adult franchise and emphasized the importance of a strong central government while supporting local autonomy.
Begum Qudsia Aizaz Rasul	● Qudsia belongs to the royal family of Malerkota in Punjab. Opposed ● separate electorates and promoted Muslim upliftment. Played a crucial role in advocating for religious unity and social justice.
Dakshayani Velayudhan	● She belonged to the Pulaya community and was the first Dalit woman to graduate in science from Cochin. ● She opposed separate electorates and emphasized nationalism over division.
Renuka Ray	● Worked for women's rights to divorce and inheritance. Represented women's organizations in the Central Legislative Assembly and became a Lok Sabha MP.

Why in News?

On the occasion of the 75th Constitutional Day in November 2024, the president of India highlighted the role of women in the constituent assembly.

National and State Women's Commission

● National Commission for Women (NCW):

- **1992:** Established as a **statutory body** under the **National Commission for Women Act of 1990**.
- **Objective:** To represent women's rights in India and give voice to their issues and concerns.
- Their campaigns address **dowry, politics, religion, job equality**, and **labor exploitation** of women.
- It enjoys all the **powers of a civil court**. But faces limitations that hinder its support for women.

● Composition of NCW:

- A **multi-member body** appointed by the **Central Government (MoWCD)**.
 - ◆ **Five members** will be appointed for their expertise in **law, legislation, trade unionism, or industry/organization management**.
 - ◆ **One member** will be appointed from the **Scheduled Castes** or **Scheduled Tribes**.
 - ◆ **Three persons** to be appointed as experts in women's empowerment, child welfare, and related laws will be appointed.
 - ◆ Members serve a **three-year term**.

● State Commissions for Women (SCW):

- In addition to the **NCW**, there are **State Women's Commissions** across India.
- These commissions are **established under respective acts or orders** with functions and powers similar to the NCW.

Why in News?

The Uttar Pradesh **State Women Commission** has proposed various measures, including **barring male tailors from taking women's measurements and restricting men** from training women in gyms and yoga centres.

Probable MCQs

1. Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Women (NCW):

1. The NCW was established in 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act of 1990.
2. The NCW is a body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
3. The NCW has limited powers and cannot perform civil court functions.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one

- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (a)

2. Consider the following statements regarding the “One Nation One Subscription” (ONOS) scheme:

1. The ONOS scheme will provide unified access to over 13,000 journals from 30 international publishers for government higher education institutions.
2. The scheme will be implemented for a duration of five years from 2025 to 2030.
3. INFLIBNET, an autonomous body under the UGC, will oversee the national subscription process.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c)

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Sessions of Parliament:

1. Article 85 of the Indian Constitution empowers the President to summon or prorogue the sessions of Parliament.
2. The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs decides the dates of Parliament sessions, and the President formalizes them.
3. By constitutional mandate, there must be at least three sessions of Parliament in a calendar year.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

4. Under which article of the Indian Constitution is the establishment of a State Finance Commission (SFC) mandated?

- (a) Article 280
- (b) Article 243-G
- (c) Article 243-I
- (d) Article 243-Z

Answer: (c)

5. With reference to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2024, consider the following statements:

1. The application process for disability certification has now been made mandatory through the UDID portal.
2. The applications for disability certification can now be submitted to any medical authority.
3. The issuance of certificates and UDID cards now has a time frame of three months instead of one month.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

ECONOMY IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

BALANCE OF PAYMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY, GDP, INFLATION

INFRASTRUCTURE, MANUFACTURING, ENERGY RESOURCES

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Balance of Payment & International Trade

The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and the Common Reporting Standard (CRS)

Key Points:

- **The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA):** It was introduced by the U.S. Department of Treasury and Internal Revenue Service in 2010 to encourage better tax compliance by preventing U.S. persons from using banks and other financial organizations to avoid taxation on their income and assets.
- **The Common Reporting Standard (CRS):** It is an information standard for the **Automatic Exchange Of Information (AEOI)** regarding bank accounts on a global level, between tax authorities, which the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** developed in 2014. Its purpose is to combat tax evasion.
- Under CRS and FATCA, **India receives detailed information about financial accounts held by its residents in foreign jurisdiction.**

Why in News?

Citing compliance with global disclosure norms, the Income Tax Department has urged taxpayers to disclose details of foreign assets and income correctly in their income tax returns.

Government plans to make Andaman and Nicobar a Tuna export hub

Key Points:

- The global tuna market is valued at \$41.94 billion.
- The Indian Ocean is the second-largest tuna region, after the Western Pacific Ocean, contributing 21% of the world's tuna production.

About Tuna Fish:

- Belongs to the Thunnus genus.
- **Habitat:** Found in both Tropical and Temperate oceans.

Why in News?

With a surge in tuna exports in 2023-24, the Centre is turning to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as a promising sourcing hub.

RBI introduces new guidelines for FPI to FDI reclassification

Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI):

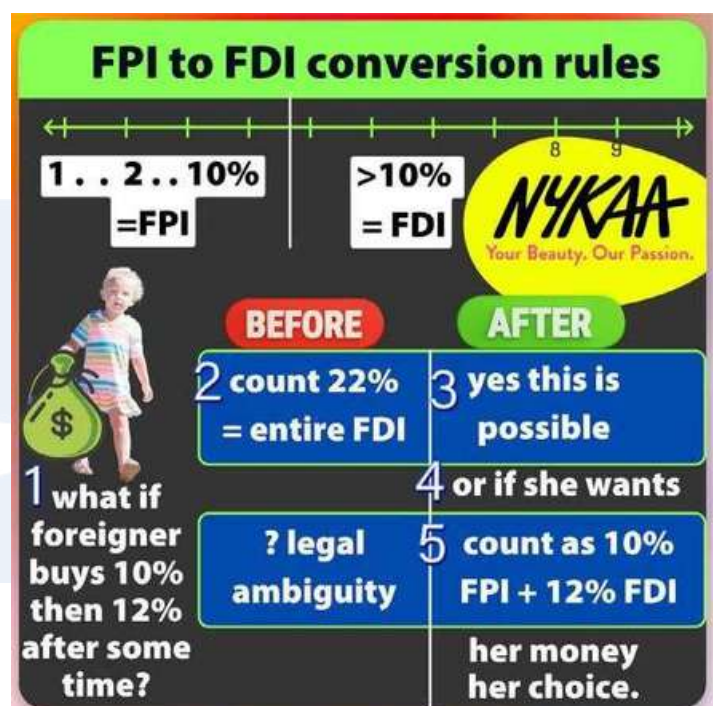
Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) refers to investments made by foreign investors in Indian companies without gaining significant control, while **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** involves foreign investors taking a controlling interest in a company, typically over 10% of its equity.

Background:

- The new rules are introduced to regulate FPIs when their holdings exceed 10% in Indian companies, requiring them to reclassify investments as FDI or divest.
- This ensures better control over foreign ownership and compliance with FDI regulations.

New Guidelines:

- FPIs must obtain necessary **government approvals** and consent from the **investee company** before reclassifying their investments as FDI.
 - Investee company refers to a company in which a Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) has invested.
- FPIs exceeding the 10% investment limit will have five **trading days** to either divest or reclassify their holdings as FDI.
- Investments beyond the prescribed limits **must fulfil the FDI conditions**, such as **sectoral caps**, **entry routes**, and **pricing guidelines**.
- Reclassification of FDI is not allowed in sectors where **FDI is prohibited**. For Example- **Gambling and Betting, Chit Funds**, etc.



Why in News?

In November 2024 RBI issued a new framework for **reclassifying Foreign Portfolio Investments (FPIs) to Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)**.

U.S. Imposed Sanctions On Indian Companies

Economic Sanctions:

- **Definition** : Economic sanctions are restrictions or bans on economic relations between the entity imposing them and the targeted entity.

● Types of Sanctions :

- **Import/Export Bans** : Blocking trade of certain goods or services.
- **Asset Freezing**: Preventing access to financial assets.
- **Banking and Currency Restrictions** : Denying access to banking systems or currency use.

Why in News?

The US imposed sanctions on nearly 400 entities and individuals in November 2024 for allegedly supporting Russia's war in Ukraine.

Assessment of the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)



About India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC):

- **2023:** Launched during the G20 Summit as a major trade route **connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe.**
- **Aim:** To strengthen regional partnerships through better infrastructure, energy grids, and digital connectivity, offering an alternative to traditional maritime routes like through the Suez Canal.

Current challenges:

- The **Israel-Palestine conflict in October 2023** halted progress on IMEC's western segment, with Saudi Arabia and Jordan delaying collaboration due to tensions with Israel.
- The **ongoing conflict has slowed connectivity efforts in West Asia**, delaying the northern part of the corridor.
- **Clean energy, fibre-optic cables, and telecom projects** are **delayed** until stability returns to West Asia.

India’s Context:

- **India** and the **UAE** launched the **Virtual Trade Corridor**, part of IMEC, to reduce administrative processes, and logistics costs, and improve trade efficiency.

Why in News?

The **India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)** , announced at the 2023 G20 summit, aims to reduce travel time by 40% and costs by 30%, potentially transforming global shipping.

US Federal Reserve’s Interest Rate Cut and Impact on India

Impact of the US Federal Reserve Rates on the Indian Economy:

Interest Rate Hike	Interest Rate Cut
● Capital Flight: Higher U.S. interest rates attract investors, leading to capital outflows from India. This can decrease Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) in India. ● Higher ECB Costs: Indian firms with External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) may face higher repayment costs due to rising global interest rates. ● Devaluation of INR: A stronger U.S. Dollar can lead to a depreciation of the Indian Rupee, increasing the currency risk for firms with ECBs. ● Increased Borrowing Costs: Tightened monetary policy increases global borrowing costs, affecting Indian businesses and consumers.	● Capital Inflows: Lower U.S. interest rates may make investors seek higher returns in emerging markets like India, leading to increased FDI and FPI. ● Lower Borrowing Costs: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may reduce domestic interest rates, making borrowing cheaper for businesses and consumers. ● Strengthening of INR: Foreign capital inflows can lead to an appreciation of the Indian Rupee. ● Positive Impact on Exports: Lower U.S. rates support U.S. economic growth, boosting demand for Indian exports.

Why in News?

Recently, the US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 25 basis points (0.25%) for the second time in 2024, signalling control over inflation.

Sectors of the Economy, GDP, Inflation

Tractor Tax: Inheritance Tax on Agricultural Assets in England

Key Points

- The UK government has proposed a 20% inheritance tax on agricultural assets worth more than £1 million from April 2026.
- The farmers in the UK staged a protest with tractors against this tax and called it a 'tractor tax'.



Why in News?

British farmers recently protested against 'tractor tax' on inheritance on agricultural assets.

Milk, Meat, and Egg production increased in 2023-24: Centre

State Rankings	
Milk Production leading States	1. Uttar Pradesh 2. Rajasthan 3. Madhya Pradesh
Egg Production Leading states	1. Andhra Pradesh 2. Tamil Nadu 3. Telangana
Current Global Rankings	
Top Milk Producers	1. India 2. USA 3. Pakistan.
Top Milk Exporters	1. New Zealand 2. Germany 3. USA 4. Netherlands 5. Belgium (India is not in the top 5 countries)
Top Eggs Producers	1. China 2. India
Top Eggs Exporters	1. Netherlands 2. Poland 3. Turkey

Why in News?

According to the **Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2024**, compiled by the **Animal Husbandry Department**, milk production in the country grew by **3.78%** in **2023-24** compared to the estimates for 2022-23.

Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)

Why in News?

In November 2024 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) retained the **State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank** as **Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**.



About Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs):

- D-SIBs are crucial to the economy; their failure could disrupt the **banking system and economic activity**.
- The RBI classifies D-SIBs based on factors like size (where a bank's assets, liabilities, and market activities exceed 2% of the country's GDP), complexity, interconnectedness, and cross-border operations.
- Due to their importance, D-SIBs are referred to as **"Too Big To Fail" (TBTF)** leading to the support of the government during crises, which gives them advantages in funding markets.



Capital Requirements for D-SIBs:

- D-SIBs are required to maintain additional capital, ranging from **0.20% to 0.80% of risk-weighted assets (RWA)**, depending on their systemic importance bucket.
 - RWA are the total assets of a bank, weighted by risk levels to determine the capital required to absorb potential losses.
- The RBI places D-SIBs into five buckets, with each bucket having a different capital charge.

D-SIBs and Systemic Importance:

- Since 2015, the RBI has annually disclosed the list of D-SIBs, classifying them into different buckets based on their systemic importance to the national economy.

State of Food and Agriculture 2024: FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization)

Key findings of the report:

- India faces hidden costs of **\$1.3 trillion annually**, the **third-highest** after China (\$1.8 trillion) and the USA (\$1.4 trillion), primarily due to **unhealthy diets** and dietary risks associated with non-communicable diseases (**NCDs**).
 - **Unhealthy diets**, like low whole grain and high sodium intake, make up **70% of hidden costs**.

Why in News?

According to the **FAO's 2024 report**, India's agrifood systems face **hidden costs** of approximately **\$1.3 trillion annually**, primarily due to **unhealthy diets** and the **health risks** they cause.

Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Energy Resources

Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme

About Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:

- **2013**: Launched to promote **blending of ethanol in petrol**.
- **Target**: Ethanol blending in petrol is **set to reach 20% by 2025-26**, advanced from the **original target of 2030**.
- **Initiatives facilitating EBP Programme**:
 - **National Policy on Biofuels (2018)** aims to promote the use of biofuels in the country.
 - The **Ethanol Interest Subvention Schemes (EISS)** was launched to support the establishment of Dedicated Ethanol Plants (DEPs).
 - **Amendment to the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951**, facilitates the smooth movement of ethanol across the country.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** reported that the **ethanol blending rate** had risen from **1.53% in 2013-14** to an **estimated 14.60% in 2023-24**.

Indonesia Inaugurated Southeast Asia's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant in Purwakarta



Key Points:

- The Purwakarta plant with 192MW capacity was developed by PLN Nusantara Power (Indonesia) and Masdar (UAE).
- The Dezhou Dingzhuang Floating Solar Farm in China is the world's largest, with a 320 MW capacity.
- India's largest floating solar plant is the 100 MW Ramagundam project in Telangana.

Why in News?

In November 2024, Indonesia inaugurated Southeast Asia's largest floating solar power plant in Purwakarta, West Java province.

EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) compliance Relief for Coffee Planters in India

About EUDR:

- It **aims to stop the import of agricultural goods linked to deforestation** . It requires growers, exporters, and traders to follow the sustainable production rules.
- With over 70% of Indian coffee exports heading to EU countries, EUDR compliance is vital for Indian growers.

Coffee Crop

- Climate: Hot and humid conditions are ideal.
- Temperature: Between 15°C and 28°C.
- Rainfall: 150 to 250 cm annually.
- Soil: Well-drained, loamy soil rich in humus, iron, and calcium.
- Shading: Grown under shady trees.
- Altitude: Grown on hill slopes at 600 to 1,600 meters above sea level.

Why in News?

The European Union has extended the compliance deadline for the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), providing relief to Indian coffee and rubber growers.

Ministry of Mines Initiates First-Ever Auction of Offshore Mineral Blocks

Key points of the auction:

- The auction features **13 mineral blocks** in the Arabian and Andaman Seas.
- **Minerals and Regions**
 - **Construction Sand:** Off the coast of Kerala (Arabian Sea)
 - **Lime-Mud:** Off the coast of Gujarat (Arabian Sea)
 - **Polymetallic Nodules and Crusts:** Off the coast of the Great Nicobar Islands (Andaman Sea)

Offshore Mineral Blocks:

- It refers to a specific area in the sea or ocean where valuable minerals are found beneath the seabed.
 - These areas are located within a country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), extending up to 200 nautical miles from its coast.

Offshore Mining or Deep-Sea Mining:

- It refers to extracting mineral deposits from the seabed, usually at depths exceeding 200 meters.
 - Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified six lakh sq. km of offshore areas with mining potential.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Ministry of Mines launched the first-ever auction of **offshore mineral blocks** to harness India's seabed resources for critical minerals and sustainable development.

Uniform Protection Protocol by Central Electricity Authority

What is the Uniform Protection Protocol:

- The Uniform Protection Protocol (UPP) is a **comprehensive framework** developed by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to **standardise protection systems across India's power grid**.
- Its primary objectives are to **enhance grid stability, reliability, and security**.
- It also aims to support the integration of renewable energy sources into the national grid.
- **Coverage:** The protocol covers protection needs for thermal and hydro plants, renewable energy sources, battery storage, substations, and transmission lines.

About Central Electricity Authority (CEA):

- Statutory body: Established under the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948.
- Currently operates under the Electricity Act, 2003.
- Serves as the technical arm of the Ministry of Power.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Central Electricity Authority (CEA)** approved the **Uniform Protection Protocol** for users of the **Indian Grid (electricity grid)**, which will be implemented across the country.

About Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs):

- ### MAP OF EASTERN & WESTERN DEDICATED FREIGHT CORRIDOR
-
- The map illustrates the Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors (WDFC and EDFC) in India. It shows the following routes and distances:
- Operational Routes (Green):**
 - Sahnewal - Shambhu (80 Rkm)
 - Khatauli - Pilkhan - Shambhu (187 Rkm)
 - Khatauli - Khurja (134 Rkm)
 - Dadri - Khurja - Bhaupur - DDU - Sonnagar (536 Rkm)
 - 1506 Rkm (WDFC segment)
 - 1337 Rkm (EDFC segment)
 - Commissioned, targeted to be completed by Sep 2023 (Pink):**
 - Shambhu - Khatauli
 - Commissioned, targeted to be completed by Dec 2023 (Orange):**
 - Dadri - Sanand (N) (938 Rkm)
 - Sanand (N) - Makarpura (138 Rkm)
 - Makarpura - Bhestan (130 Rkm)
 - Bhestan - Sanjan (108 Rkm)
 - Sanjan - Vaitarna (83 Rkm)
 - Vaitarna - JNPT (105 Rkm)
 - Targeted to be completed by Dec 2024 (Red):**
 - Sonnagar - Andai - Dankunt (538 Rkm)
 - Railways to implement (Blue):**
 - DDU - Sonnagar
- 2196 RKM OPERATIONAL**
[TOTAL 2843 RKM]
(77.2% OPERATIONAL)
- Legend:**
- Operational
 - Commissioned, targeted to be completed by Sep 2023
 - Commissioned, targeted to be completed by Dec 2023
 - Targeted to be completed by Dec 2024
 - Railways to implement

- A study by the University of New South Wales in Australia highlighted the impact of **Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs)** in boosting India's economy and railway revenue.

About 'Sagarmanthan:

- ## Why in News?

The Observer Research Foundation and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) hosted a global maritime conference – **Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue** – in the national capital in November.

Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Energy Resources

UGC Introduces Flexible Degree Completion Options

Key Points:

- The UGC's new guidelines offer two flexible degree options for undergraduate students:
 - **Accelerated Degree Programs (ADPs):** These allow academically strong students to graduate faster by earning more credits per semester. A 3-year program can be completed in five semesters, and a 4-year program in six or seven semesters.
 - **Extended Degree Programs (EDPs):** These cater to students facing challenges, allowing them to extend their program by up to two semesters while taking fewer credits per semester.
- **Role of Higher Education Institutions:** They will assess eligibility based on academic performance and recommend adjustments.

Differences between Accelerated Degree Programs (ADPs) and Extended Degree Programs (EDPs):

Aspect	Accelerated Degree Program (ADP)	Extended Degree Program (EDP)
Program Duration	Shortened duration to complete the degree (e.g., A 3-year program can be completed in five semesters).	Longer duration to complete the degree (e.g., 4-5 years for a 3-year degree).
Study Pace	Students complete more courses per semester, advancing faster.	Students take fewer courses per semester, allowing for a slower pace.
Credit Accumulation	Higher credit load per semester, allowing faster completion.	Fewer credits per semester, with flexibility to extend the duration.
Flexibility	Flexible but focused on finishing the program quickly.	Flexible to extend duration based on personal circumstances academic needs.
Eligibility for Early Graduation	Students can graduate earlier than the usual duration.	Graduation happens after an extended period, not earlier than normal.
Target Audience	Suitable for students who wish to fast-track their studies or have prior academic preparation.	Suitable for students who may need extra time due to personal, academic, or other reasons.

Why in News?

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has unveiled new guidelines allowing undergraduate students to accelerate or extend their degree program duration.

China Revamps Population Policy

About New Policy:

- It aims to enhance **childbirth support services**, expand childcare systems, strengthen education, housing, and employment support, and cultivate a birth-friendly social atmosphere.

Why in News?

- China unveiled a series of new policies in October to create a more supportive environment for having and raising children,
- It is in response to the significant demographic challenges an ageing population poses.

Rise in Women's Workforce Participation

Key Points:

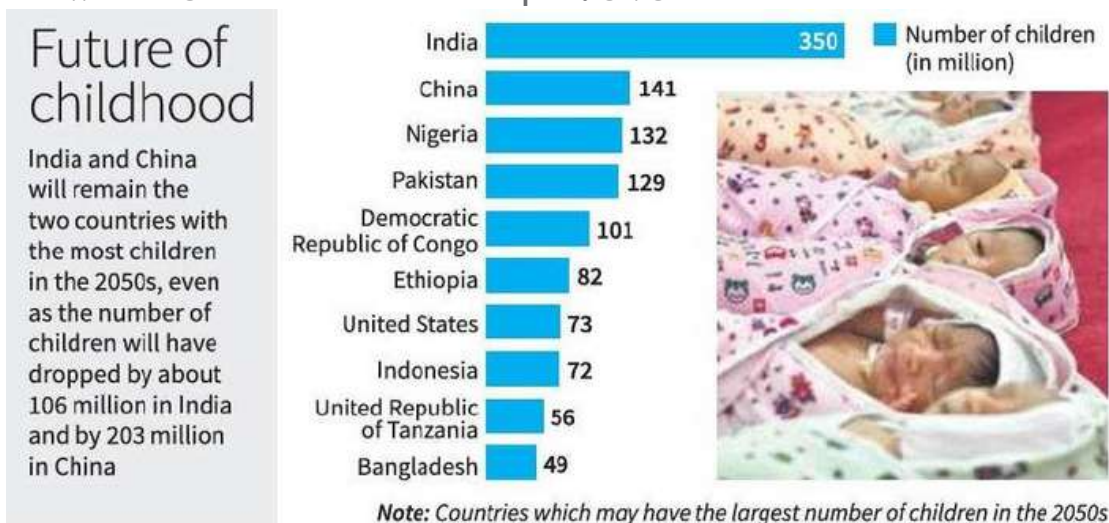
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR) & Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):**
 - Data from the **Annual PLFS Reports (2017-24)** highlights a **growing** trend of **female participation** in the workforce.

Survey Year	WPR %	LFPR %
2017-18	20.0	23.3
2023-24	40.3	41.7

Why in News?

The significant increase in women's involvement in the labor force in India is reflected in the **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** and **Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**. **rising**

State of the World's Children 2024 Annual Report: UNICEF



SOURCE: THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2024, UNICEF

Three Major Findings of the Reports:

● Demographic transition:

- By 2050, the **child population will stabilize** at **2.3 billion**, with growth in climate-vulnerable South Asia and Africa.

● Climate and environmental crises:

- Nearly **half of the world's children** , about **one billion**, face high risks from climate and environmental hazards.
- Since 2022, **extreme weather** has shut schools for **400 million students** , harming rights and growth

● Frontier technologies:

- The digital divide continues to hinder the benefits of frontier technologies like **artificial intelligence (AI)**.
- Over **95% of people in high-income countries** are connected to the **internet**, compared to just **26% in low-income countries**.

Why in News?

The **2024 UNICEF State of the World's Children Report** was released in November 2024.

World Bank Report on Healthy Longevity (2024)

Key findings of the reports:

- **Non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** are the leading cause of death in **Low-and-Middle-Income Countries (LMICs)**, with deaths projected to rise from **61 million in 2023** to **92 million by 2050**.
- **India** has the **world's second-largest elderly population (140 million, aged 60+)**, with a rapid rise in NCDs like **cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes**.

Why in News?

In **September 2024**, the **World Bank** released a report unlocking the **Power of Healthy Longevity: Demographic Change, Non-communicable Diseases, and Human Capital**.

Debranning Reduces Health Benefits of Millets: Study

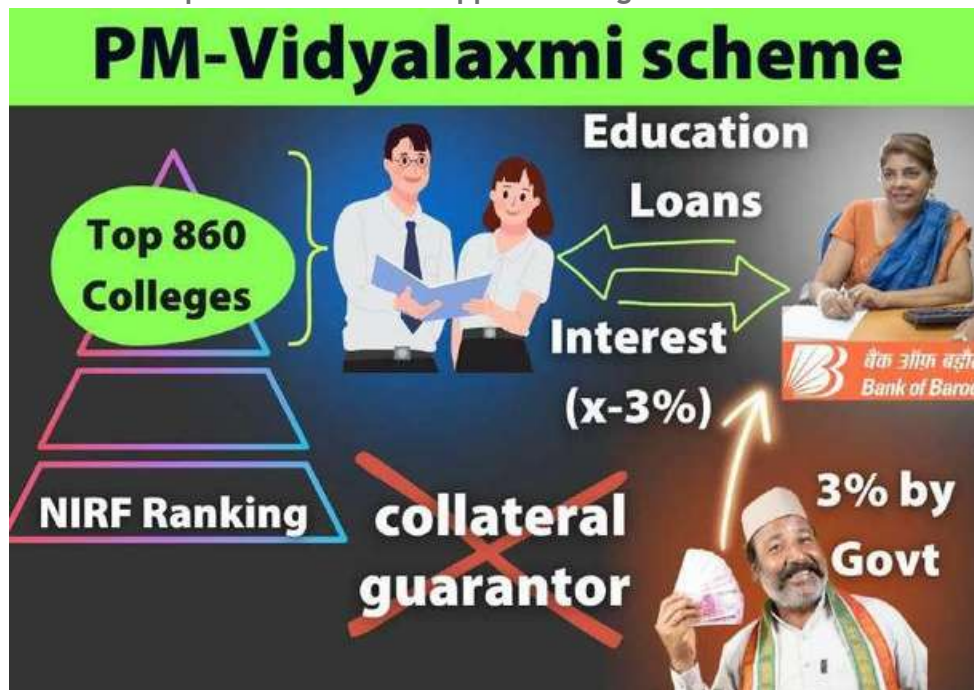
Key details:

- **Bran:** It is the outer layer of grain, such as millet, which is rich in fibre, minerals, and vitamins.
- **Debranning of millets:** It refers to the process of removing this outer layer (bran), which reduces the grain's nutritional content.
- **Reasons for Debranning of millets:**
 - Shelf Life Extension
 - Reduced Cooking Time

Why in News?

According to a recent study removing the bran from millets results in decreasing the protein, dietary fibre, fat, mineral, and phytate content in them.

PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme to provide financial support for higher education



About the PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme:

Feature	Details
Scheme Type	Central Sector Scheme
Objective	To enable students admitted to Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs) to access education loans without collateral or guarantor.
Eligibility Criteria	Students studying in institutions ranked in the top 100 by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) , as well as those in the 101-200 range from state government and all central government governed institutions.
Budget Allocation & Duration	₹3,600 crore (2024–2031)
Credit Guarantee	75% central government credit guarantee on loans up to ₹7.5 lakh
Interest Subsidy	3% interest subsidy on loans up to ₹10 lakh (for families with annual incomes below ₹8 lakh) during the moratorium period.
Managing Authority	Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the **PM-Vidyalaxmi scheme** for accessible education loans.

Decline in Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditure in India

About Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditure (OOPE):

- It refers to **direct payments made for medical services**, such as doctor visits, medications, and hospital stays.
- **High OOPE** creates a **financial strain**, particularly for **low-income families**, often resulting in **poverty and debt**.

Current status in Healthcare Spending:

Year	Government Health Expenditure as % of GDP	Government Health Expenditure as % of Total Government Spending
2014-15	1.13%	3.94%
2021-22	1.84%	6.12%

Why in News?

The decrease in **Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE)** on healthcare in India has been recently highlighted due to higher government spending and better public healthcare infrastructure.

The First Digital Population Clock of Bengaluru installed at ISEC

Key point:

- The project was a joint initiative between the **Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC)** and the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)**.

Why in News?

Recently the **first digital population clock** of Bengaluru was launched at the **Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC)**.

Probable MCQs

1. Consider the following statements:

1. The tight monetary policy of the US Federal Reserve could lead to capital flight.
2. Capital flight may increase the cost of firms with existing External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs)
3. Devaluation of domestic currency decreases the currency risk associated with ECBs

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

2. Consider the following statements regarding the PM-Vidya Lakshmi Scheme:

- 1. The scheme provides a 75% central government credit guarantee on loans up to ₹7.5 lakh.
- 2. The scheme covers loans for undergraduates only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

3. Recently, in which country was Southeast Asia's largest floating solar power plant inaugurated?

- (a) Singapore
- (b) Indonesia
- (c) Japan
- (d) Malaysia

Answer: (b)

4. Consider the following statements regarding the new guidelines for Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) reclassification:

- 1. FPIs exceeding the 10% investment limit will have five trading days to either divest or reclassify their holdings as FDI.
- 2. Reclassification of FDI is allowed in sectors where FDI is prohibited, such as gambling and betting.
- 3. FPIs must obtain necessary government approvals and consent from the investee company before reclassifying their holdings as FDI.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

5. According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), what is the main reason for classifying a bank as a Domestic Systemically Important Bank (D-SIB)?
- (a) The bank's assets and liabilities are less than 2% of the country's GDP.
 - (b) The bank provides essential services in international trade.
 - (c) The failure of the bank could disrupt the banking system and the economy.
 - (d) The bank is based in multiple countries with branches worldwide.

Answer:(c)

IR IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION, CONFERENCES, AGREEMENTS
DEFENSE AND INTERNAL SECURITY

International organisation, Conferences, Agreements

Historic Visit by the Prime Minister of India to Nigeria



Historical Relations:

- **1958:** India established a diplomatic presence in **Nigeria**.
- **2007:** India-Nigeria ties were elevated to a **strategic partnership** during PM Manmohan Singh's visit.

Key Developments:

- **Prime Minister of India** was conferred with Nigeria's **second-highest national honour, Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger**, becoming the second foreign dignitary to receive this after **Queen Elizabeth** in **1969**.
- India provided Nigeria with \$100 million in concessional loans and capacity-building programs to enhance skills and local expertise.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Indian Prime Minister visited Nigeria, the first such visit in 17 years.

Arrest warrants against Israeli PM Netanyahu by International Criminal Court (ICC)

Comparison between International Criminal Court (ICC) and International Court of Justice (ICJ):

Aspect	ICC	ICJ
Establishment Year	2002	1945
Location	The Hague, Netherlands	The Hague, Netherlands
Founding Treaty	The Rome Statute	Charter of the United Nations, ICJ Statute
Jurisdiction	Global, over individuals	Between states, not over individuals Famous Case: Kulbhushan Jadhav Case
Core Functions/ Crimes	Genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crime of aggression	Adjudicates state disputes, gives advisory opinions
Membership	India is not a party to the Rome Statute along with the US and China.	All the 193 member states of the UN are automatically parties to the Court.
Powers	Jurisdiction Over Crimes, Individual Accountability, Complementarity Principle, Issuing Arrest Warrants, Investigations and Prosecution, Enforcing Penalties	Jurisdiction, Dispute Settlement, Binding Nature of Judgments, Enforcement, Voluntary Jurisdiction, Legal Opinions

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **International Criminal Court** issued **arrest warrants** for **Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu**, **ex-Defense Minister Yoav Gallant**, and Hamas officials, accusing them of war crimes during the 13-month Gaza-Israel war.

Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty by G20

About Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty:

- The Alliance connects countries in need of assistance with policies **aimed at eradicating hunger and poverty**.
- It includes **81 countries (including India)**, international organizations, and various **philanthropic foundations**.
- The Alliance provides over 50 policy tools to help countries develop their national programs. Key focus areas include: **School meals, Cash transfer programs, Support for small family farms, Water access solutions, etc.**

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty** was launched at the **2024 G20 Summit in Brazil** to address global hunger and poverty challenges.

Argentina to withdraw from the Paris Agreement

Paris Agreement:

- It is a global treaty adopted in **2015** to limit global warming to **below 2°C**, with efforts to keep it to **1.5°C above pre-industrial levels**.
- It requires all participating countries to set and regularly update their climate action plans, known as **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, to increase their efforts over time to tackle climate change.

How does a country withdraw from the Paris Agreement?

- **Article 28 of the Paris Agreement** lays out the procedure and timeline for a country's withdrawal from the treaty.
- If a member state wants to withdraw from the treaty, it has to submit the notification of a withdrawal to the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN, based at UN Headquarters in New York.
- Withdrawal becomes effective one year after the UN receives the notification.
- Until the withdrawal comes into force, the member state remains in the Paris Agreement and has to fully participate in all activities under it, according to the UNFCCC website.

Why in News?

In November 2024, **Argentina** considered leaving the **Paris Agreement** and withdrew its negotiators from the **COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan**.

India Bids for the 2036 Olympics

Why in News?

India has submitted a 'Letter of Intent' to the International Olympic Committee, expressing its desire to host the 2036 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Key Points:

- Other countries bidding for the 2036 Olympic games include **Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey**.
- The Indian bid highlighted the spirit of '**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**'- which means 'the world is one family' (found in Hindu texts such as the Maha Upanishad) and the country's vast **cultural & religious diversity, shaped by thousands of years of history**.

Constitutional Amendment in Turkey to Extend President's Term

Key Points:

- **Background:** Recep Tayyip Erdogan was elected as president in 2014. In 2018, he was elected to the same position for a second term.
- The Turkish Constitution says that no one may serve as president for more than two terms.

- A new Constitutional Amendment has been proposed to allow a candidate to serve more than two terms as President.

Why in News?

The main political ally of Turkish leader Tayyip Erdogan suggested that a constitutional amendment should be considered to allow the president to run again in elections set for 2028.

Canada's Student Direct Stream (SDS) programme

About Programme:

- **2018:** The Student Direct Stream (SDS) programme was launched.
- **Aim:** To provide faster processing for eligible post-secondary students from 14 countries, including India.
- **Shorter processing time:** Under the SDS programme, students could secure study permits in just 20 working days.

Why in News?

Canada Govt ends **fast-track student visas** in November 2024 for India and 13 other countries.

ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024



Key Points:

- It is a Platform for global leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss strategies for advancing the cooperative movement.
- **Organisers:** International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) (established in 1895) in collaboration with IFFCO, AMUL, KRIBHCO, and the Government of India.
- **Theme:** "Cooperatives Build Prosperity for All"
- **UN International Year of Cooperatives 2025:** Launched by India's Prime Minister, focusing on "Cooperatives Build a Better World".
- **Commemorative Postal Stamp:** Features a lotus symbolising Panchatatva (earth, water, fire, air, space), reflecting sustainability and harmony.

Cooperatives in India

● Constitutional Provisions:

- The **97th Constitutional Amendment (2011)** granted constitutional status and protection to cooperatives.
- Added **Part IX B (Articles 243-ZH to 243-ZT)** to govern cooperative societies' functioning.
- Recognized the right to form cooperatives as a fundamental right under **Article 19(1)**.
- Introduced **Article 43-B** as a Directive Principle of State Policy to promote cooperatives.

● Promotion of Cooperatives:

- The **Ministry of Cooperation**, established in **2021**, aims to strengthen and expand the cooperative movement to the grassroots level.

Why in News?

India hosted the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Global Cooperative Conference in New Delhi in November 2024.

Russia's new nuclear doctrine

About the New Nuclear Doctrine of Russia:

- **Meaning of Nuclear Doctrine:** It defines how nuclear weapons are developed, and deployed, and their intended use in defense, including in response to specific threats.
- **Key Feature**
 - **Expanded Nuclear Attack Definition** : Aggression by a non-nuclear state, supported by a nuclear state, is treated as a joint attack, justifying nuclear retaliation.
 - **Lowered Response Threshold:** Protection extends to Russia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, not just its existence.
 - **Belarus Under Russia's Nuclear Umbrella:** Belarus is formally included in Russia's nuclear defense.

Why in News?

Amidst the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, Russia has updated its 2020 Nuclear Doctrine.

Defense and Internal Security

France Evaluating the Pinaka Rocket System in India

About Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launch (MBRL) System:

- It is a reliable, battle-tested artillery weapon system that can fire over a wide area in any weather.

- Developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India.

- The system includes a **multi-barrel rocket launcher** that can fire **12 rockets** within just **44 seconds**.

- Range of Operations:

- Pinaka Mk1 - 38 Km

- Pinaka Mk2 - 75 Km.

- Future versions are expected to have ranges of **120 km and then to 300 km**.

- Global Interest

- Armenia is the first country to purchase it, and France is also considering it among other options.



Why in News?

France is evaluating India's Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher (MBRL) system for its requirements and is soon going to carry out a detailed evaluation of the system.

First Ever Space Exercise 'Antariksha Abhyas - 2024' in New Delhi

About 'Antariksha Abhyas - 2024':

- **Objective:** To strengthen India's national interests in space by improving the understanding of space-based assets and services.
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Evaluate the operational dependency on space resources.
 - Identify weaknesses and possible disruptions to space services.
- **Participation:** It includes units from the Defence Space Agency, Army, Navy, Air Force, and specialized branches like the Defence Cyber Agency, Defence Intelligence Agency, and Strategic Forces Command.

Why in News?

In November 2024, 'Antariksha Abhyas - 2024', a three-day exercise to address threats to and from space-based assets, was conducted in New Delhi **to boost India's space security**.

The fourth edition of Exercise 'Sea Vigil-24'

About Exercise Sea Vigil:

- **2018:** The National Level Coastal Defence Exercise was conceptualized to validate various measures implemented to enhance maritime security following the '**26/11**' attacks.

- **Aim:** To activate and assess India's Coastal Security and Defence systems.
- The exercise focuses on **securing coastal assets**, including ports, oil rigs, moorings, cable landing points, critical infrastructure, and coastal populations.
- It is serving as a precursor to the Theatre Level Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX), conducted biennially by the Indian Navy.

Why in News?

The Indian Navy is set to conduct the fourth edition of the 'Pan-India' Coastal Defence Exercise 'Sea Vigil-24'.

Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) Missiles

About Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS):

- It is a long-range, guided **surface-to-surface ballistic missile system** capable of carrying varying payloads, including **cluster bomblets** or a **single warhead**.
 - It has various ranges (**70-300 km**) depending on variants.
- Capable of striking deep behind enemy lines, targeting **military installations, supply lines, and command centers**.
- It is fired from **Mobile Launch Platforms**.



Why in News?

In November 2024 Ukraine's military used **long-range American-made ATACMS** missiles for the first time to strike into Russia.

India successfully tests its first long-range hypersonic Missile

Key Features of Hypersonic Missiles:

Speed Classification	Mach Range	Description
Supersonic	Mach 1 to Mach 5	Speeds between 1 and 5 times the speed of sound.
Hypersonic	Mach 5 and greater	Speeds 5 times or more the speed of sound.

Why in News?

In November 2024, DRDO successfully conducted a flight test of India's first long-range hypersonic missile from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha.

Indian Army Receives Sabal-20 Logistics Drones For Use In Eastern Sector

About Sabal-20:

- It is an **electric unmanned helicopter** with variable pitch technology, **capable of carrying up to 20 kg payloads**.
- It is engineered for demanding missions like **long-range deliveries, high-altitude operations, and precision logistics**.



Why in News?

The Army has received **Sabal-20 logistics drones** procured from EndureAir Systems for deployment in the **eastern sector**, the company announced.

UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) Mast for Naval Ships

About UNICORN Mast:

- It is an **advanced antenna system** designed to improve the stealth and performance of naval warships.
- It **combines multiple antennas usually placed separately** on a mast into one radar dome (radome).
- This **reduces the mast's visibility and lowers the electronic signatures of warships** making them harder to detect.



Why in News?

India and Japan have signed a Memorandum of Implementation (MoI) to co-develop and co-produce the UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) mast for Indian Naval warships.

Probable MCQs

1. Which of the following statements is not correct regarding the Pinaka multiple rocket launcher system?
(a) It is a multiple rocket launcher developed by DRDO for the Indian Army.

- (b) The maximum range for the Mark-II ER version is 90 km.
- (c) It is a stationary system and cannot be mobile.
- (d) It was used during the Kargil War to neutralize enemy positions.

Answer: (c)

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS):

1. It is a long-range, surface-to-surface ballistic missile system capable of carrying different types of warheads.
2. ATACMS can strike targets up to a maximum range of 1000 km.
3. The missile system is fired only from fixed ground-based launch platforms.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (a)

3. Consider the following statements regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC) and International Court of Justice (ICJ):

1. The ICC was established under the Rome Statute, while the ICJ was established under the Charter of the United Nations.
2. ICC deals with disputes between states, whereas ICJ prosecutes individuals for crimes such as genocide and war crimes.
3. Both ICC and ICJ are located in The Hague, Netherlands.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

4. Consider the following statements regarding the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Global Conference, 2024:

1. It was held in New Delhi.
2. The ICA was established in 1895 as the apex body representing the global cooperative movement.
3. The conference focused on promoting cooperatives exclusively in the insurance and banking sectors.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a)

5. Which of the following is incorrect regarding the Sabal-20 logistics drone?

- (a) Sabal-20 is an electric unmanned helicopter designed for logistics operations.
- (b) The drone is capable of carrying up to 50 kg payloads and is used for combat missions.
- (c) It is equipped with variable pitch technology for precision logistics and long-range deliveries.
- (d) The Sabal-20 is deployed in the eastern sector of India for demanding missions like high-altitude operations.

Answer: (b)

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION

POLLUTION

FLORA AND FAUNA

Physical Geography

Salt Chimneys in the Dead Sea



About Salt Chimneys:

- **Salt Chimney:** A salt chimney is a vertical structure formed when saline groundwater rises through the Dead Sea and crystallizes into salt.

Dead Sea:

- It is **actually a salt lake between Israel and Jordan**, lies 430 meters below sea level, the lowest point on Earth.
- Known for its extreme salinity and therapeutic properties.

Why in News?

Researchers discovered distinctive salt chimneys on the floor of the Dead Sea, created by highly saline groundwater.

Hurricane Rafael and Typhoon Kong-Rey

Why in News?

- **Typhoon Kong-rey** recently hit **Taiwan's east coast**.
- **Cuba** is reeling after a powerful Category 3 **hurricane Rafael** ripped across the island in November.

Cyclone Names across the World

Region	Name
Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, Eastern & Central North Pacific	Hurricane
Western North Pacific	Typhoon
Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, Western South Indian Ocean	Cyclone
Eastern Southern Indian Ocean	Willy-Willy

Redevelopment of Hyderabad's Musi Riverfront

About Musi River:

- Formerly known as **Muchukunda River (ancient name)**.
- Originating from **Anantagiri Hills, near Vikarabad, 90 km west of Hyderabad**.
- **Hyderabad**, which divides the city into old and new sections, is located on the Musi River.
- **Dams:** Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar.



Why in News?

The Chief Minister of Telangana proposed an ambitious plan to **redevelop the Musi Riverfront in Hyderabad**.

Environment Conservation

Elephant Deaths in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, MP



About Kodo Millet:

- **Kodo Millet is a nutrient-rich, drought-resistant grain traditionally grown in India, particularly in the central (Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh) and southern regions.**
- The infected Kodo millet plants contained mycotoxins (cyclopiazonic acid) that can cause immune issues and potentially lead to cancer.

About Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve:

- It is located in the eastern **Satpura hills**.
- It is covered with moist deciduous forest and covers a significant area of **Panpatha Wildlife Sanctuary**.

Why in News?

In November 2024, **ten elephants died in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve**, located in Madhya Pradesh due to **consuming fungus-infected Kodo millet**.

Outcomes of COP-16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Held in Cali, Colombia

Key points of COP-16:

- **Launch of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF):** The KBF will support accelerated efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda, SDG targets, and the 2050 goals of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)**.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF):

- **2022:** Adopted during COP-15 in 2022.
- It outlines **four objectives** for **2050** and **23 targets** for **2030**, focusing on mitigating biodiversity threats and fulfilling human needs sustainably its key targets include:
 - **30-by-30 agreement:** Safeguard 30% of land and water by 2030.
 - **Benefit-sharing mechanism:** Develop a system for sharing benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources and traditional knowledge.
- **Creation of the Cali Fund:** Major companies benefiting from **Digital Sequence Information** will contribute a portion of their profits to **support Indigenous communities**.
 - **Digital Sequence Information (DSI)** refers to **genetic data stored** in digital formats, such as **DNA or RNA** sequences, for analysis and sharing.
- **Agreement to Create a Permanent Subsidiary Body:** A permanent body will be established under CBD to enhance the participation of Indigenous peoples in the Convention's processes.



Why in News?

Recently, the 16th COP to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** concluded in Cali, Colombia.

Chhattisgarh's New Tiger Reserve: Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla



About Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla tiger reserve:

- It is Chhattisgarh's **fourth tiger reserve**, after the Achanakmar, Indravati, and Udanti Sitanadi tiger reserves.
 - It falls between two other important tiger reserves located in **Bandhavgarh, Madhya Pradesh** and Palamau, Jharkhand.
 - It is **adjacent to Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve**, also in MP.
- It is **India's 56th tiger reserve** and the **third largest**, followed by Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh) tiger reserve and Manas Tiger Reserve (Assam).

Why in News?

In November 2024, Chhattisgarh government notified the **Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla** in the state as **India's 56th tiger reserve**.

India Signed the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement

Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement:

- **2023:** the United Nations adopted the **BBNJ Agreement**.
- It is also known as the **High Seas Treaty**.
- **Aim:** To **protect marine ecosystems** and promote **sustainable resource use** in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

- Only 14 out of 104 signatories have ratified the treaty, requiring 60 ratifications to come into force.
 - India has not ratified the treaty yet.

Why in News?

In November 2024, India signed the **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement**.

Categorization of Industrial Sectors by CPCB

Categorization of industrial sectors:

- The following criteria on the 'Range of Pollution Index' for the categorization of industrial sectors:
 - **Red category:** Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 60 and above.
 - **Orange category:** Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 41 to 59.
 - **Green category:** Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 21 to 40.
 - **White category:** Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index scores 1 to 20.
- **White category industrial sectors are practically non polluting.** There is no necessity of obtaining the "**Consent to Operate**" for the White category of industries. An intimation to the concerned SPCB is sufficient. No Red category of industries are normally permitted in the ecologically
- fragile area / protected area.
- **Objective of categorization:** Securing industrial pollution control by the **Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**, and **Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981** by linking with the categorization of industries, consent management, and vigilance.

Why in News?

The Union Environment Ministry in November 2024 exempted 39 categories of industries from the mandatory requirement of approaching **State pollution control boards** for permission to run their industries.

Chhatisgarh's Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary



Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary:

- **Location:** Situated in Raipur district, Chhattisgarh.
- **Rivers:** The sanctuary is bordered by the **Balmedhi, Jonk, and Mahanadi rivers.**
- **Flora:** Home to Teak, Sal, and mixed forests.
- **Fauna:** The sanctuary is inhabited by various species, including **Cheetals, Sambhars, Nilgai, Wild Boars, Sloth Bears, and Wild Dogs.**

Other Tiger Conservation sites in Chhattisgarh include the Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, Udanti-Sitanadi Tiger Reserve, and Indravati Tiger Reserve.

Why in News?

In November 2024, a new male tiger was spotted in Chhattisgarh's **Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary**, sparking hopes for the revival of the state's tiger population. .

India's Rising Carbon Emissions

Why in News?

According to the report, the **Global Carbon Project 2024** India's carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fossil fuel burning are projected to increase by **4.6% in 2024**, the highest among major economies.

Global Carbon Project is a research project of Future Earth and a research partner of the World Climate Research Programme.

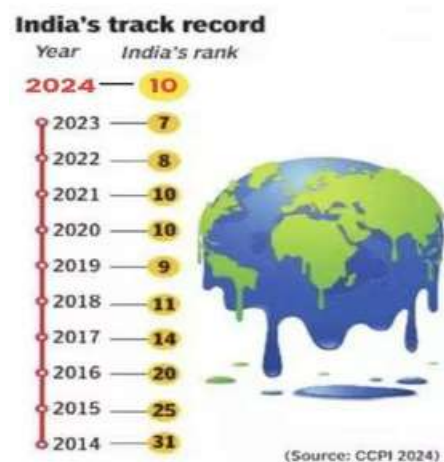
Key Points:

- Global fossil-based **CO₂** emissions are expected to reach **37.4 billion tonnes** in 2024, a **0.8% rise from 2023** .
- **CO₂** is the primary driver of anthropogenic climate change, accounting for about **70% of global warming**
- **CO₂** remains in the atmosphere for centuries, unlike **CH₄ (10 years)** or **nitrous oxide (N₂O, 100 years)**.

Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), 2024

Key Points:

- It is released **annually** by **Germanwatch, New Climate Institute, and Climate Action Network International**.
 - Germanwatch, based in Bonn and Berlin, Germany, is an independent organization focused on sustainable global development and environmental protection.
- In CCPI 2024, the **first three positions are empty**,



followed by **Denmark in fourth place.**

- **India ranked 10th** out of 60+ countries in climate change efforts, despite dropping two spots from last year.
- **The largest two emitters, China and the U.S,** remain very low at **55th and 57th** place, respectively.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI 2025)** report, was released at the annual UN climate conference in Baku.

Pollution

Categorization of Industrial Sectors by CPCB

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Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)

About CAQM:

- **Statutory body:** Established under the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region (NCR) and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021.
- **Mandate and Responsibilities:**
 - Improve coordination, research, and address air pollution issues.

- Focus on preventing and controlling air pollution in Delhi-NCR and adjoining areas.

- **Chairperson:** Senior government official (Secretary or Chief Secretary) for three years or until 70.

Why in the News?

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) is in focus for its efforts to address stubble burning and air quality concerns in Punjab and Haryana.

Ashtamudi Lake faces severe pollution from untreated sewage

About Ashtamudi Lake:

- Located in Kollam district, Kerala, India.
- The name “Ashtamudi,” meaning “eight braids” in Malayalam, reflects the lake’s eight distinct arms or channels.
- It is the **second-largest estuarine ecosystem in Kerala, after Vembanad Lake**, and was designated a **Ramsar Wetland** of International Importance in **2002**.



- **Biodiversity:** Rich in flora and fauna, the lake supports mangroves, fish, and bird species, vital for local livelihoods.

Why in News?

Ashtamudi Lake, a Ramsar site in Kerala, faces severe pollution from sewage, plastic, and sedimentation, leading to biodiversity loss, algal blooms, and harm to fishermen’s livelihoods.

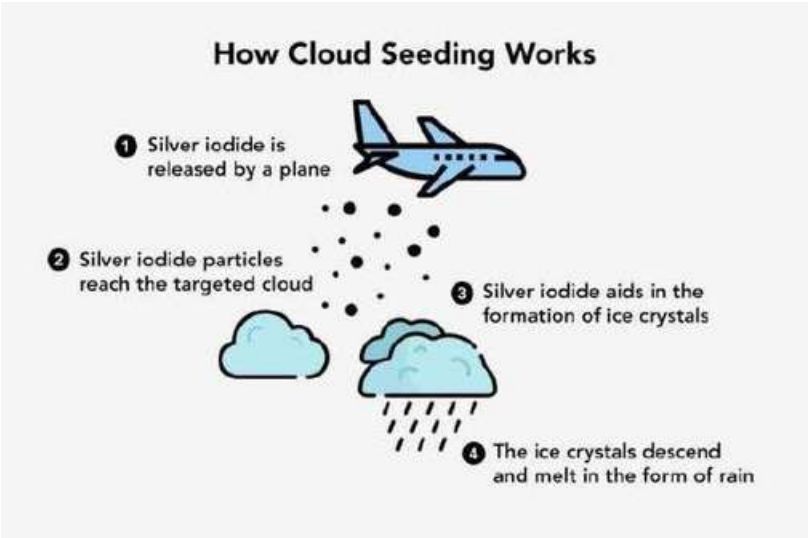
Delhi Government Appeals for Cloud-Seeding to Combat Air Pollution Crisis

About Cloud Seeding:

- Cloud seeding is a scientific process that involves **injecting** ~~clouds~~ with particles **silver iodide, potassium iodide, dry ice, and liquid propane** to generate **artificial rain**.
- These chemicals attract water vapour, leading to the formation of rain clouds.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Delhi government appealed to the Centre for approval to use **cloud seeding** to induce **artificial rain** to tackle the city's air pollution crisis.



Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)

About Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP):

- It is a framework of emergency measures to prevent further **air quality deterioration** in **Delhi-NCR** when it breaches specified thresholds of air quality of the Air Quality Index (AQI).
- Approved by the Supreme Court in **2016 and notified in 2017**, it is enforced by the **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)**.

AQI Range	Category
0 to 50	Good
51 to 100	Satisfactory
101 to 200	Moderate

GRAP Stages	AQI Range	Category	Actions
Stage I	201-300	Poor	Suspend unauthorized construction on plots over 500 sqm; enforce dust control measures; prohibit waste burning; ensure compliance with vehicle emission norms; maintain uninterrupted power supply; promote shared and public transportation.

Stage II	301-400	Very Poor	Restrict diesel generator use to essential services; conduct inspections to curb dust at construction sites; increase parking charges to reduce private vehicle use; enhance the availability of CNG/electric buses and metro trains.
Stage III	401-450	Severe	Stop all non-essential construction work; suspend mining activities; consider shifting younger students to online classes; restrict BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel vehicles.
Stage IV	> 450	Severe+	Close schools and enforce odd-even vehicle operations; reduce office attendance to 50%; allow only essential goods vehicles; ban non-BS VI diesel vehicles; halt all non-critical construction work.

Why in News?

In **November 2024** the Supreme Court of India questioned the Delhi government over the delay in implementing Stage IV of the **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)**.

Flora and Fauna

First-Ever Sighting of Eurasian Otter in Pune

Why in News?

A rare Eurasian Otter was discovered in Pune District, Maharashtra, which is the first time this species has been seen in the area.

About Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*):

- It is one of the **three otter species** found in India, alongside the **Smooth-coated Otter** (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) and **the Small-clawed Otter** (*Aonyx cinereus*).
- **Distribution:**
 - **India:** Primarily found in the Himalayan foothills, certain areas of Northeast India, and the Western Ghats.
 - **Globally:** Europe, Asia, and northern Africa.
- **Habitat:** Found in clean, freshwater habitats, such as rivers, and lakes.
- **Behaviour and Ecology:**
 - These otters are solitary and mostly nocturnal. They play an essential role in regulating fish populations and maintaining ecological balance.
 - They are highly sensitive to water pollution and habitat disturbances.



Red-Headed Vulture Spotted First Time in Kasaragod, Kerala



About Red-Headed Vulture:

- Also known as the **Asian king vulture**, **Indian black vulture** or **Pondicherry vulture**.
- **Habitat:** It resides in **dry forests** and nearby areas.
- **Distribution:** It is primarily found in **Central India, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and parts of Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.**
- **Conservation Status:** Critically Endangered (IUCN), and **Schedule IV** of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972.
- **Types of Vultures in India:**

Vultures	IUCN Status
Indian Vulture	Critical Endangered
White-rumped Vulture	Critical Endangered
Slender-billed Vulture	Critical Endangered
Himalayan Vulture	Near Threatened

Why in News?

In November 2024, a rare **Red-Headed Vulture** was spotted for the **first time in Kasaragod, Kerala.**

‘*Ophiophagus kaalinga*’, Scientific Name For The Kalinga Sarpa

Key Points:

- The researchers have revealed **four distinct king cobra lineages**, previously thought to be one.
- The lineages include those from the **Western Ghats, Indo-Chinese, Indo-Malaysian, and Luzon Island**.

Why in News?

The king cobra species from the **Western Ghats**, known as “**Kalinga Sarpa**,” will be officially named ***Ophiophagus kaalinga***.



African Penguins Could Be Extinct By 2035: Study About African Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*):

- **Endemic Region:** Native to **Southern Africa**, particularly **South Africa and Namibia**.
- **Habitat:** Lives along coastlines **within 40 km of shore**, using these areas for breeding, molting, and resting.
- **Physical Characteristics:** Features a streamlined body, a distinctive black stripe, and unique black spots on the chest, with **pink glands** above the eyes for temperature regulation.
- **Conservation Status:** **Critically Endangered (IUCN)**



Why in News?

According to a study conducted in November 2024, **African penguins** could face extinction in the wild by 2035 if current threats continue.

Probable MCQs

1. Consider the following pairs :

Vulture Species	IUCN status
Indian Vulture :	Critical Endangered
White-rumped Vulture:	Endangered

Slender-billed Vulture:	Vulnerable
Himalayan Vulture:	Near Threatened

How many of the pairs given above is/are not correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All Four

Answer : (b)

2. The Global Carbon Project is a research initiative under which of the following organizations?

- (a) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- (b) World Health Organization (WHO)
- (c) Future Earth
- (d) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Answer:(c)

3. Which of the following Tiger Reserves is NOT located in Chhatisgarh?

- (a) Achanakmar Tiger Reserve
- (b) Udanti-Sitanadi Tiger Reserve
- (c) Indravati Tiger Reserve
- (d) Nameri Tiger Reserve

Answer:(d)

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), 2024:

1. It is released annually by Germanwatch, New Climate Institute, and Climate Action Network International.
2. India ranked 10th in CCPI 2024, improving its position by two spots compared to last year.
3. The first three positions in CCPI 2024 are vacant, with Denmark securing the fourth spot.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

5. Consider the following Pairs:

RAMSAR Sites	States
Ashtamudi Lake :	Kerala
Chilika Lake:	Odisha
Loktak Lake:	Manipur
Vembanad Lake:	Tamil Nadu

How many of the pairs given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All Four

Answer: (c)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

SPACE TECHNOLOGY

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BIOTECHNOLOGY

HEALTH

DAILY APPLICATIONS OF TECHNOLOGY

Space Technology

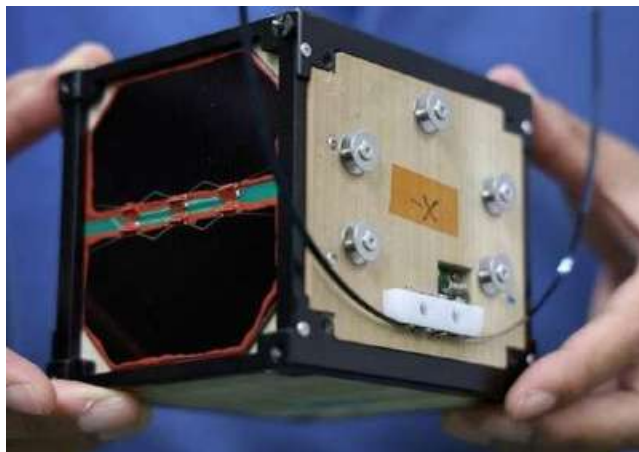
LignoSat: World's First Wood-Panelled Satellite

About LignoSat:

- The **world's first wood-panelled satellite** was launched into space to test the reliability of timber as a renewable building material for future space travel.
- It is created by **Kyoto University, Japan**.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the world's first wood-panelled satellite, LignoSat, was launched.



MACE: Highest Imaging Cherenkov Telescope in the World in Hanle, Ladakh

About MACE Telescope:

- It is an imaging atmospheric **Cherenkov telescope (IACT)** located near Hanle, Ladakh, India.
- MACE is the **highest (in altitude) and second-largest Cherenkov telescope in the world**.
- It was built by the **Electronics Corporation of India**, Hyderabad, for the **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre** and was assembled at the campus of the **Indian Astronomical Observatory at Hanle**.
- The telescope is the **world's second-largest gamma-ray telescope**, aiding advancements in astrophysics, fundamental physics, and particle acceleration.



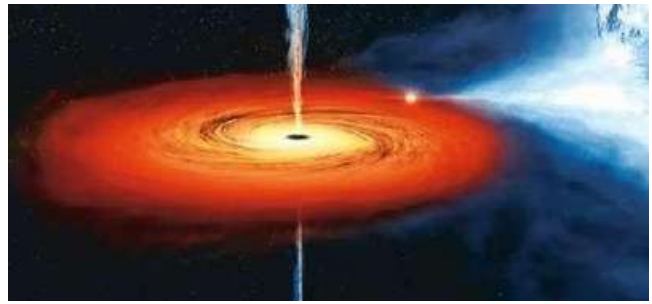
Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE)** telescope was inaugurated in **Hanle, Ladakh**.

Discovery of Black Hole Triple

About Black Hole:

- A black hole is a region in space where gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape from it.



A Black Hole Triple:

- It consists of a black hole with two companion stars.
- In the discovered system, one star orbits the black hole closely, while the second star is positioned at a far greater distance, orbiting every 70,000 years.

Why in News?

Scientists published the discovery of a **“black hole triple”** in space for the first time in October 2024.

Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence

India Shines in Network Readiness Index 2024

Key Highlights of India's Performance in NRI 2024:

- India jumped from **60th to 49th** in the **2024 Network Readiness Index (NRI)**.
- Secured the **1st global rank** in **AI scientific publications, AI talent concentration, and ICT services exports**.
- Ranked **2nd** among **lower-middle-income countries**, showcasing its digital leadership.



Network Readiness Index (NRI):

- The NRI ranks 133 economies on network readiness across **Technology, People, Governance, and Impact**.
- It measures a country's use of **digital technologies** for economic and social progress.
- The index is published **annually** by **INSEAD and the World Economic Forum**.

Why in News?

India's rise in the 2024 Network Readiness Index (NRI) highlights the nation's progress in digital infrastructure, innovation, and governance.

6GHz Spectrum

About 6GHz Spectrum:

- The 6GHz band (5.925 GHz to 7.125 GHz) is key for Wi-Fi 7 (IEEE 802.11be) and next-gen wireless tech.
- It offers faster speeds, lower latency, and better connectivity than older bands like 2.4GHz and 5GHz.
 - Latency is the delay or time it takes for something to happen after a request is made.
 - For example, in technology, it's the time between clicking a button and seeing the result.
- Applications of 6GHz Spectrum:
 - **Wi-Fi 7 (IEEE 802.11be):** The 6GHz band enables faster speeds, greater bandwidth, and supports devices like consoles, smartphones, and laptops.
 - **5G Connectivity:** Telecom operators aim to use the 6GHz band to boost 5G speed and expand coverage.
 - **Short-Range Communications:** The 6GHz band offers low interference, ideal for high-speed data transfer in dense urban areas.

Why in News?

In November 2024, Sony announced that the **PlayStation 5 Pro** will not launch in India due to the lack of approval for the 6GHz wireless band required for Wi-Fi 7, affecting its wireless connectivity.

India Launches First AI Data Bank

About Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank:

- It is designed to provide essential access to high-quality, diverse datasets for researchers, startups, and developers.
- It will enable real-time analytics of critical data, including satellite, drone, and IoT (Internet of Things) data.
- The initiative aligns with India's goal to use AI for predictive analytics in disaster management and cybersecurity, improving response to emerging challenges.

Why in News?

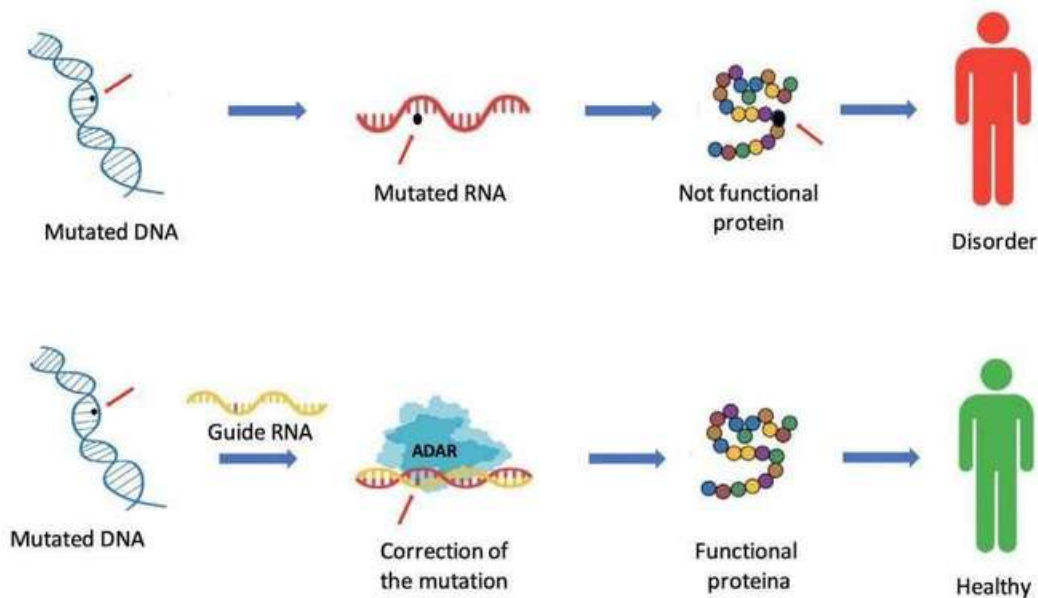
In November 2024, the Ministry of Science and Technology launched the country's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank.

Biotechnology

RNA Editing

What is RNA?

- **RNA (Ribonucleic Acid)** is a molecule in living organisms that plays a **key role in transferring genetic information** from DNA to produce proteins.
- RNA is made up of **smaller units called nucleotides**
 - There are different types like **mRNA (messenger RNA)**, **tRNA (transfer RNA)**, and **rRNA (ribosomal RNA)**.



What is RNA Editing?

- **RNA Editing** is a natural process **where the RNA sequence is altered after it is made from DNA**.
- This means that the RNA can be modified, changing the genetic information without altering the DNA itself.
- **Applications:** Gene therapy for genetic diseases, treatments for cancer and epilepsy, crop growth and disease resistance in agriculture, RNA-based systems in synthetic biology etc.

RNA Editing vs. DNA Editing

RNA Editing	DNA Editing
RNA edits are temporary, reducing long-term risks.	Permanent changes facilitate lasting gene correction.
Decreased Risk of Immune Reaction	Can lead to unintended mutations with lasting effects.
Can precisely target mRNA without impacting the genome.	Ensures accurate and long-lasting modifications at the genetic level.

Provides temporary solutions, with effects diminishing over time.	Permanent and inheritable changes can lead to long-term impacts.
Mainly used for gene modulation and RNA correction.	Wide-ranging applications, from gene therapy to synthetic biology.
Might not completely fix the underlying genetic defects.	Can directly repair genetic mutations and defects.

Why in News?

As per reports in November 2024, a **U.S.-based company became the first to treat a genetic condition by editing RNA** at the clinical level.

Applications of Intelligent bacteria

Why in News?

A team led by Bagh engineered **Escherichia coli** bacteria as **“computers” to perform basic math** through **biochemical reactions**, advancing biocomputing.

Key Points:

- **Functioning Mechanism:** Makes use of synthetic promoters and transcriptional genetic circuits in bacteria.
- **Potential Application:** This could impact **pharmaceuticals, enable early disease detection** (e.g., cancer), and advance **precision medicine**.

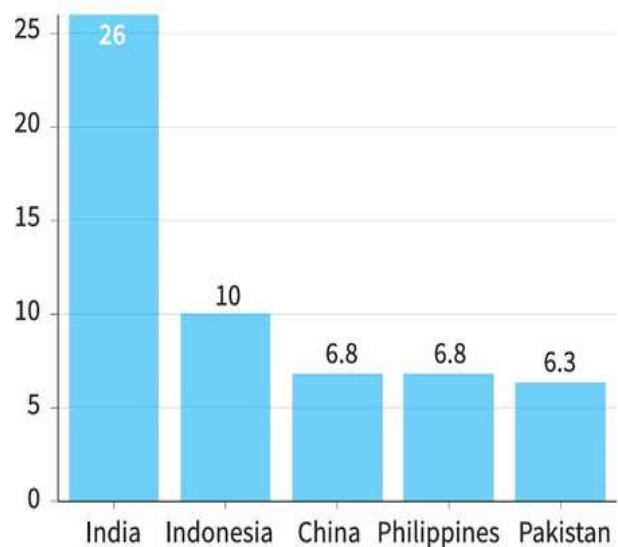
Health

Global Tuberculosis Report 2024 released by WHO

Key Points:

- India accounted for 26% of global TB cases and 26% of global TB deaths in 2023. **This makes India the largest contributor to global TB.**

Chart 1: The chart shows the countries with the highest levels of TB burden (in %)



Tuberculosis	
Caused By	A bacterial infection caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis . It spreads through inhaling droplets from coughs or sneezes.
Symptoms	A persistent cough, Weight loss, Night sweats, Fever, etc.
Treatment	TB can be cured with proper treatment. Bacille -Calmete-Guerin (BCG) vaccine is available for its prevention.
Government Initiatives	● National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP): Aim to eliminate TB cases in India by 2025, ahead of the global target of 2030. ● Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan: Provides extra support to patients, encourages community participation, and promotes CSR activities. ● Nikshay Poshan Yojana: Offers a financial incentive of ₹500 to TB patients registered on the Nikshay Portal.

Why in News?

According to the **Global Tuberculosis Report 2024 released by WHO** , India had the highest tuberculosis (TB) burden in 2023.

Role of Mini-Protein in Cancer Treatment

About Mini-Protein:

- It is a small, specially designed protein that can target specific molecules or cells in the body. It is also known as a **radiopharmaceutical** because it contains a radioactive element (**e.g. Actinium-225**) attached to the protein.
 - **Example: AKY-1189** is a mini-protein designed to deliver radiation directly to cancer cells having the Nectin-4 protein on their surface.

Why in News?

Researchers have reported the discovery of a new 'mini-protein' that carries radiation dose directly to tumors without harming healthy tissues.

Diabetic Drug Semaglutide

About Semaglutide:

- **Semaglutide** is used for weight loss in specific patients, and also to lower blood sugar levels.
- Medication used for the treatment of **type 2 diabetes** and an anti-obesity medication used for long-term weight management.
- Semaglutide is not for use in people with **type 1 diabetes**.
- Semaglutide is not available as a generic medicine.

Compounding is a process of combining, mixing, or adjusting the ingredients of a medication — to meet patient needs when popular branded formulations are in short supply.

Why in News?

Novo Nordisk, the Danish pharmaceutical company behind the popular weight-loss and diabetes medications, has urged U.S. authorities to halt the compounding of these products, citing potential safety risks.

Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic (CKM) Syndrome

About Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic (CKM) syndrome:

- CKM Syndrome is an interconnected condition involving cardiovascular disease (CVD), chronic kidney disease (CKD), and metabolic disorders (e.g., diabetes, obesity).

Causes:

- **Shared Risk Factors** : Hypertension, diabetes, and obesity.
- **Lifestyle Factors** : Poor diet, sedentary habits, and smoking exacerbate risk.

Prevention:

- Early screening for at-risk populations.
- Maintaining a balanced lifestyle with a focus on heart and kidney health.

Why in News?

Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic (CKM) syndrome, a complex mix of lifestyle factors and the effects of globalization is rapidly emerging as a silent global threat to health.

‘Know Your Medicine (KYM)’ App by NADA

Key Points

- **Aim**: To give athletes important information to help them **avoid accidental doping and ensure fair play**.
- KYM, under the **National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)** aims to raise awareness and educate athletes, providing them with vital information to remain drug-free.
- The app lets users quickly check if a medicine or its ingredients contain substances banned by the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**.



About National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India:

- **2005:** Established by the **Government of India** with the aim to **ensure dope-free sports**.
- Functions as an **autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the **Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports** launched the nationwide **‘Know Your Medicine (KYM)’** app.

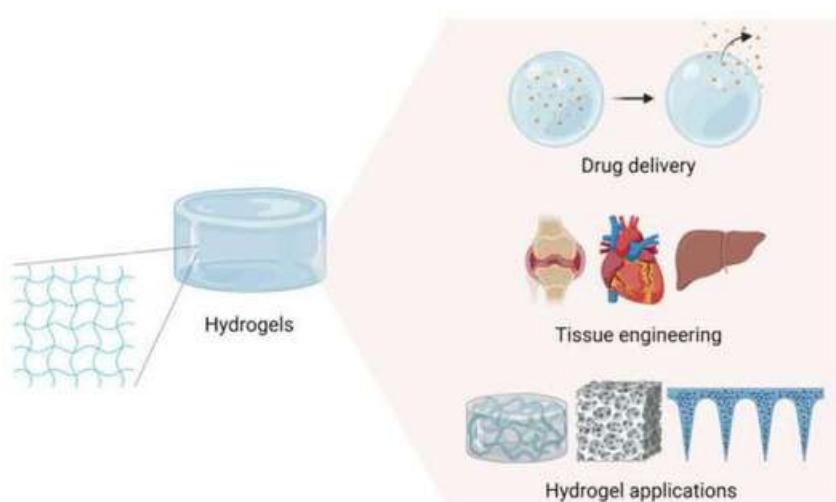
and Sports launched the nationwide **‘Know Your Medicine (KYM)’** app.

Hydrogels

About Hydrogels:

- Hydrogels are soft, three-dimensional structures that use water as the main medium.
- They can maintain their shape and have a high water absorption capacity, with water content reaching up to 99%.
- In addition, hydrogels also have good **biocompatibility**, **biodegradability**, etc.

- **Uses:** It is used in **drug release, medical dressing, gum tissue regeneration, bone repair, etc.** which are some of the most promising medical materials in the future.



Why in News?

A research team from the **Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN)**

innovation using **injectable hydrogels** for the early detection and treatment of

developed an **gastrointestinal tract (GIT) cancers**.

Daily Applications of Technology

Patent Evergreening

About Patent Evergreening:

- **Patent:** A statutory right granted by the respective governments. It gives one the exclusive rights and bars others from making, using, selling and importing product or process, based on the patented invention without one's prior permission.
- The term of every patent in India is **20 years** from the date of filing.

● Patent Evergreening Process :

- **Original Patent Grant:** A company develops a new product or process and files for a patent, which gives them exclusive rights to make, sell, or use that product for a set period (usually 20 years).
- **Incremental Innovation:** Before the original patent expires, the company makes slight modifications or improvements to the original product, such as changes in formula, packaging, or manufacturing process.
- **New Patent Filing:** The company files for a new patent on the modified version of the product, claiming it as an “improvement” over the original. This is sometimes seen as a way to “extend” the patent life.
- **Extended Exclusivity:** With the new patent granted, the company can maintain its market exclusivity for a longer period, as competitors are blocked from entering the market with similar products.

● Legal Remedy

- **Indian Patent Act, 1970:** Patents are not granted for simply finding a new form of an existing substance unless it proves to work better or have enhanced effectiveness.
- Thus, it aims to curb the patent evergreening by any means.

● Case Study:

- Indian Patent Office rejected U.S. pharmaceutical giant **Johnson & Johnson’s (J&J)** attempt for Evergreening of Patent on manufacturing of the **anti-tuberculosis drug Bedaquiline** in India beyond July 2023.
- In **Novartis AG v. Union of India & Others (2013)**, the apex court held that the legislative intent is to prevent evergreening of a patent monopoly that in no way enhances the drug’s therapeutic efficacy.

Comparison between patented drugs and generic drugs:

Aspect	Patented Drug	Generic Drug
Definition	Exclusive drug developed and protected by a patent.	Identical drug sold after the patent expires.
Patent Status	Protected by a patent for a set period.	No patent protection, available after expiration.
Price	Expensive due to research and exclusivity.	Cheaper due to competition and no development costs.
Brand Name	Sold under a specific brand name.	Sold under the generic name or different brand.
Approval Process	Approved with original clinical trials.	Approved based on bioequivalence, without new trials.
Market Exclusivity	Manufacturer has exclusive rights to sell.	No exclusivity, multiple manufacturers can sell.

Composition	Original formulation and ingredients.	Same active ingredient, but may have different excipients.
Time to Market	Available when first developed.	Available after the patent expires.
Quality	High quality from the original manufacturer.	Meets the same standards as the original drug.
Innovation	New treatment or formulation.	No new innovation, provides a cost-effective option.

Biosimilars:

Biosimilars are medicines that are very similar to an already approved biologic drug but are not identical. They are made from living organisms and are used to treat various conditions, often at a lower cost than the original drug.

Why in News?

The government has taken several steps to improve affordability of medicines which includes dealing with patent evergreening and biosimilars.

Hotspot Technology in Cricket



Key Points:

- **HotSpot Technology:** It is a thermal imaging-based technology to detect movements. It was introduced in International Cricket in 2006. Its high cost per match is a key reason currently not being used in India.
- **DRS (Decision Review System):** It is a technology in cricket that helps umpires make accurate decisions on close calls using tools such as ball-tracking, and sound sensors.

Similar Technologies Used in Football	
VAR (Video Assistant Referee)	Review decisions like goals, penalties, red cards, and mistaken identities using video footage.
Goal-Line Technology (GLT)	Determines whether the ball has completely crossed the goal line using cameras or sensors.
Hawk-Eye	Tracks the ball's position for accurate goal-line and offside decisions.
Electronic Performance Tracking Systems (EPTS)	Tracks players' movements and physical data using GPS, cameras, and wearable devices.

Why in News?

Concerns were raised over the Indian cricketer's controversial dismissal in the Test match between India and New Zealand, sparking debate on **DRS** reliability and the **lack of Hotspot technology**.

Probable MCQs

1. Which organization released the Global Tuberculosis Report 2024?

- (a) World Health Organization (WHO)
- (b) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- (c) World Bank
- (d) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Answer: (a)

2. Consider the following statements regarding RNA Editing and DNA Editing:

1. RNA Editing can modify mRNA without affecting the genome, while DNA Editing makes permanent changes in the genetic code.
2. RNA Editing leads to permanent genetic modifications, whereas DNA Editing provides temporary fixes for genetic diseases.
3. RNA Editing is mainly used for gene modulation and correction, while DNA Editing cannot correct genetic mutations for long-term solutions.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (a)

3. Which country launched the world's first wood-paneled satellite, LignoSat, in November 2024?

- (a) Japan
- (b) United States
- (c) Russia
- (d) China

Answer: (a)

4. Which of the following statements regarding the MACE Telescope is/are correct?

- 1. MACE is the world's second-largest gamma-ray telescope.
- 2. It is located near Hanle, Ladakh.
- 3. It was built by the Electronics Corporation of India.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (c)

5. The term 'Semaglutide' sometimes mentioned in the news recently is used for:

- (a) Treatment of Tuberculosis
- (b) Lowering blood sugar levels and long-term weight management
- (c) Managing high blood pressure
- (d) Treating chronic pain

Answer: (b)

HISTORY IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

- KARNATAKA'S FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATION WITH YAKSHAGANA
- THADOU COMMUNITY IN MANIPUR
- SCIENTIFICALLY VALIDATED SOCIETAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE (SVASTIK) INITIATIVE
- 150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRSA MUNDA
- 1ST BODOLAND MOHOTSAV CELEBRATED IN NEW DELHI
- MAORI HAKA DANCE
- INDIRA GANDHI PEACE PRIZE, 2023 WINNERS: DANIEL BARENBOIM & ALI ABU AWWAD
- ROCK-CUT FOOTPRINTS AND A HUMAN FIGURE DISCOVERED FROM AT KANHIRAPOIL IN KERALA
- BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LACHIT BORPHUKAN: ARMY GENERAL OF AHOM KINGDOM
- CIA-CIA LANGUAGE: INDONESIA
- SAMIS, KVENS AND FOREST FINNS
- DHUDMARAS VILLAGE, CHATTISGARH
- YADAGIRIGUTTA IN NALGONDA DISTRICT, TELANGANA
- THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Karnataka's Foundation Day Celebration with Yakshagana

About Yakshagana:

- It is a classical dance-drama that originated in coastal Karnataka.
- It is a temple art form, primarily portraying mythological stories and episodes from the Puranas.
- Performers wear elaborate costumes, vibrant makeup, and ornate headgear, creating a visually striking display.



Major Theatre forms in India:

Theatre Form	Region	Key Features
Bhand Pather	Kashmir	Combination of dance, music, and acting; satire and parody; music with surnai, nagaara, and dhol.
Swang	Haryana, Uttar Pradesh	Originally music-based; later included prose; emotional softness and rasa; Rohtak (Haryanvi) and Hathras (Brajhasha) styles.
Nautanki	Uttar Pradesh	Musical theatre; meters like Doha, Chaubola, Chhappai; includes male and female actors; centers in Kanpur, Lucknow, Hathras.
Raasleela	Uttar Pradesh	Based on Krishna legends; prose and songs combined; plays attributed to Nand Das.
Bhavai	Gujarat	Synthesis of devotional and romantic sentiments; instruments like bhungal, tabla, flute, pakhaawaj.
Jatra	Bengal	Musical plays; dialogues added later; inspired by Krishna Jatra and worldly love stories.
Maach	Madhya Pradesh	Songs prominent between dialogues; terms like bol (dialogue), vanag (rhyme), rangat (tunes).
Bhaona	Assam	Presentation of Ankia Naat; combines Sanskrit, Brajboli, and Assamese; cultural fusion.
Tamasha	Maharashtra	Female lead (Murki) in dance; evolved from Gondhal, Jagran, Kirtan; features classical music and gestures.

Dashavatar	Konkan, Goa	Ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu depicted; uses wooden and papier mache masks.
Krishnatam	Kerala	Cycle of eight plays based on Krishna's life; performed over eight days.
Mudiyetu	Kerala	Performed in Kali temples; depicts Goddess Bhadrakali's victory over Darika.
Koodiyaatam	Kerala	Based on Sanskrit traditions; roles include Chakyaar, Naambiyaar, and Naangyaar; focus on gestures and eye movements.
Therukoothu	Tamil Nadu	Street play performed during temple festivals; based on Draupadi's life; includes humour and storytelling.

Why in News?

Karnataka celebrated its Foundation Day (Karnataka was officially formed in 1956) in November 2024 with performances of Yakshagana.

Thadou community in Manipur

About Thadou Tribe:

- Indigenous communities reside in the hilly regions bordering the Imphal Valley in Manipur.
- They are also known as **Chillya, Kuki, Kukihin, Teizang and Theruvan**.
- They speak **Chin and Thado**, languages that are part of the **Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language** family.
- The Thadou people believe that the **god Pathen** is the creator of all things.



Why in News?

The **Thadous**, one of the **oldest and largest non-Naga tribes in Manipur**, have extended their support for implementing the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Scientifically Validated Societal Traditional Knowledge (SVASTIK) Initiative

About SVASTIK initiative:

- **2021:** launched by the **CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (NIScPR)**.

- **Objective:** To preserve traditional practices, encourage scientific validation of traditions, and foster confidence in their scientific value.

- **Significance:**

- Dissemination of knowledge in English and 16 Indian languages.
- It promotes **interdisciplinary research** and enables the rapid validation of traditional knowledge through modern science.



A CSIR-NIScPR initiative to communicate scientifically validated traditional knowledge of India

in **16** Indian languages

Why in News?

The significance of the **SVASTIK initiative** was highlighted during the International Conference on Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge 2024.

150th Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda

About Birsa Munda:

- **1875:** Born in the Munda tribe in the **Chotanagpur region (now Jharkhand)**.
- **1886-1890:** Inspired by the **Sardari agitation** against British rule, led by the **Oraon and Munda tribes**.
- **1899:** Launched the **Ulgulan (The Great Tumult) movement**, using guerrilla tactics to resist British control.
 - He urged tribals to reject colonial laws and rent payments, advocating for the establishment of Birsa Raj.



Religious and Social Reforms

- **Birsait Sect:** Birsa founded the Birsait faith, promoting the worship of one God while opposing conversion activities and animal sacrifice.
- **God-like Reverence:** He is also known as '**Bhagwan**' (God) and '**Dharti ka Abba**' (Father of the Earth).

Why in News?

November 15, 2024, marks the 150th birth anniversary of revolutionary tribal leader Birsa Munda, celebrated as **Janjatiya Gaurav Divas**.

1st Bodoland Mohotsav Celebrated in New Delhi

Key Points:

- **Aim:** To **integrate the indigenous** Bodo people living in Bodoland, Assam, West Bengal, Nepal, and the international border areas of the Northeast.
- **Theme:** "Peace and Harmony for Prosperous Bharat".

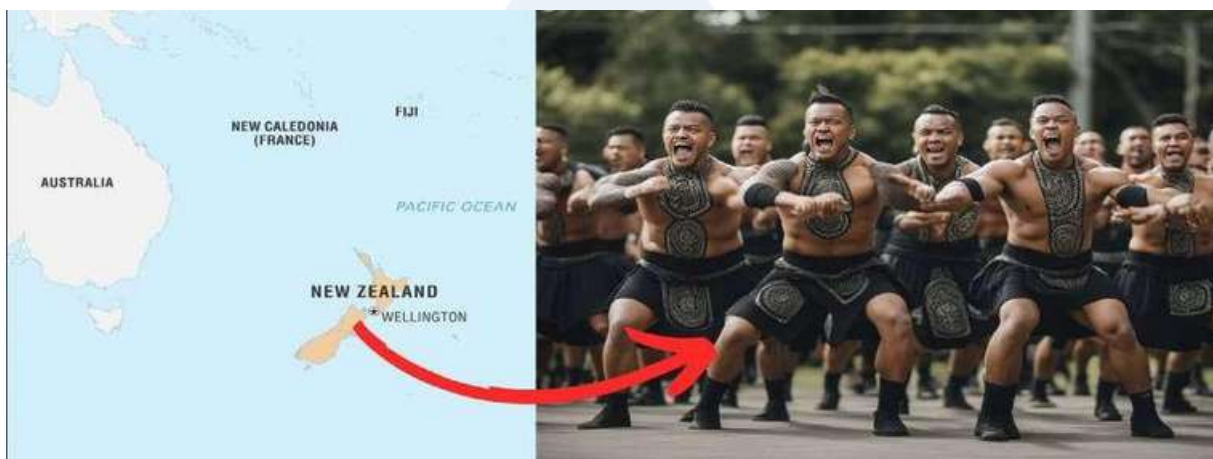
About Bodo:

- Also known as **Boro**, they are an ethnolinguistic group indigenous to **Assam, India**.
- They are part of the Bodo-Kachari family and are spread across northeastern India.
- The Boros were listed as both "**Boro**" and "**Borokachari**" in The **Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950**.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Prime Minister of India attended the **1st Bodoland Mahotsav** in New Delhi.

Maori Haka Dance



About Maori Haka Dance:

- It is a traditional ceremonial dance of the **Maori people**, the indigenous Polynesian inhabitants of **New Zealand**.
- Originally performed by **warriors before battle to intimidate opponents**.
- It is a group act that includes **synchronized movements, forceful chants**, and **expressive facial gestures**, such as wide eyes and **protruding tongues**.

Why in News?

In November 2024, **New Zealand's parliament** was briefly suspended after performed a **haka** in protest against a controversial bill.

Maori lawmakers

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize, 2023 Winners: Daniel Barenboim & Ali Abu Awwad

Key Points:

- **Daniel Barenboim:** A renowned classical pianist and conductor recognized for promoting peace through musical and cultural dialogue.
- **Ali Abu Awwad:** A Palestinian peace activist honored for advocating non-violence and dialogue through his organization, Roots, founded after his time in prison.

About Indira Gandhi Peace Prize:

- **1986:** Established by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust in memory of former **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi**.
- **Objective:** To honor individuals or organizations worldwide for their efforts in peace, disarmament, and development.
- **Focus Areas:** Peace, disarmament, and development initiatives.

Why in News?

In November 2024, the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development 2023 was presented.

Rock-cut footprints and a human figure discovered from at Kanhirapoil in Kerala



Why in News?

At **Kanhirapoil, Kerala** , **24 pairs of prehistoric rock-cut footprints** and a **human figure** were discovered on private land.

Key Points:

- According to archaeologists, these carvings date back to the **Megalithic period** (~2000 years old).
- **Archaeologists** suggest a **mortuary significance**, while **locals** associate the footprints with a goddess.

Birth Anniversary of Lachit Borphukan: Army General of Ahom Kingdom

About Lachit Borphukan:

- **1671**: he was known for his leadership in the **Battle of Saraighat** against the **Mughals on the Brahmaputra River near Guwahati**.
- He is considered one of the **greatest of Assamese heroes, symbolising the valour, courage, and intelligence** that defines the Assamese self-identity.
- The Ahom Kingdom ruled over much of **Assam and the North East from 1228 to 1826 AD**. They were one of India's longest-reigning ruling dynasties.
- At their peak, their kingdom stretched from **modern-day Bangladesh to deep inside Burma**.
- **1672**: He **died** from natural causes. His remains are enshrined at the **Lachit Maidaam near Jorhat, Assam**.
- The Lachit Borphukan **Gold Medal is awarded** to the top cadet at the **National Defence Academy**.
 - **1999**: the medal honors Borphukan's **heroism and sacrifices, inspiring defense personnel**.



Why in News?

'**Lachit Diwas**' is celebrated on **November 24th** every year to honor the **birth anniversary of Lachit Borphukan**, a legendary Ahom general and hero of Assam.

Cia-Cia Language: Indonesia

About the Cia- Cia Language:

- Cia-Cia, an **indigenous language of Indonesia** that has no script. It has survived orally for centuries in Indonesia and is now spoken by about 93,000 people in the Cia-Cia tribe.
- **Language family**: Austronesian languages

About Cia-Cia Tribe:

- The Cia-Cia people are found throughout the southern part of Buton Island southeast of the peninsula of Sulawesi Island in Indonesia's vast archipelago.

Samis, Kvens and Forest Finns

About Samis, Kvens and Forest Finns:

- Norway has designated certain groups with '**long-standing attachment to the country**' as national minorities, including the **Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Jews, Forest Finns, Roma, and the Romani people.**

Why in News?

In November 2024 **Norway's Parliament** issued an unreserved apology for its assimilation policies towards **Sami, Kven, and Forest Finn peoples.**

Dhudmaras village, Chhattisgarh

About Dhudmaras Village:

- **Location:** Situated in **Kanger Valley National Park (KVNP)** in Chhattisgarh.
 - Surrounded by dense forests, the Kanger River, and diverse wildlife, it is a key eco-tourism spot.
- **Cultural Significance:** Dhudmaras is home to the Dhurwa Tribe, a subgroup of the Gond Tribe.

Why in News?

Dhudmaras village has been chosen for the Best Tourism Village Upgrade Programme under the **UN World Tourism Organisation's Rural Development** initiative.

Yadagiriguta in Nalgonda district, Telangana

About Yadagiriguta:

- **Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy Temple or Yadagiriguta:**
 - A popular Hindu Temple of Narasimha Swamy, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It is situated on a hillock in the Nalgonda district, Telangana.

Why in News?

The Telangana government **decided to restore the famous temple town Yadadri's old name, Yadagiriguta.**

This Day In History

Date	Theme	Brief description
November 1	Kerala Formation Day (1956)	On this day, Kerala was organized on linguistic principles, and the modern borders of Kerala came into existence. The State Reorganisation Act 1956 formed Kerala state. Travancore-Cochin state was merged with the Malabar district of Madras and Kasaragod taluk of South Canara district. Parts of Southern Travancore-Cochin on the other hand went to Madras state.
November 2	The Balfour Declaration (1917)	Britain's declaration supported the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The declaration was a letter from the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, to Lord Lionel Walter Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community. The declaration was issued during World War I, when Britain was concerned about the direction of the war and wanted to create a friendly ally in the Middle East.
November 3	Birth anniversary of Amartya Sen	(1933) Amartya Kumar Sen (he/him) is an Indian economist and philosopher born in Santiniketan, West Bengal, India. He is best known for his contributions to welfare economics, social choice theory, and development economics, for which he was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1998.
November 4	The Paris Agreement came into effect	(2016) The Paris Agreement entered into force. It was adopted by 196 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015.

November 5	World Tsunami Awareness Day	(1854) The day is inspired by the 1854 Japanese tsunami when a farmer set fire to his rice sheaves to signal villagers to flee to higher ground. This act of self-sacrifice became a symbol of preparedness and saved countless lives. World Tsunami Awareness Day is observed each year to raise awareness of the dangers of tsunamis and the importance of being prepared. The United Nations General Assembly established World Tsunami Awareness Day in 2015.
November 9	Fall of the Berlin Wall	(1989): The Berlin Wall, symbolizing the Cold War divide between East and West Germany, was opened, leading to the reunification of Germany. The official purpose of this Berlin Wall was to keep so-called Western “fascists” from entering East Germany and undermining the socialist state.
November 11	Armistice Day	(1918): The end of World War I, marked by an armistice agreement between the Allies and Germany. Armistice was signed at Compiègne, in the region of Picardy, France.
November 14	Jawaharlal Nehru’s 135th birth anniversary	(1889): Born in Allahabad, Nehru was the son of Motilal Nehru, a prominent lawyer and political leader. Nehru was one of the leading figures in India’s freedom struggle. Nehru served as India’s first Prime Minister from August 15, 1947, until his death on May 27, 1964. Parliament passed a resolution to commemorate his birth anniversary as Children’s Day in his memory.
November 17	Death Anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai	(1928): He led protests against the Simon Commission that was instituted to study potential constitutional reform. He was severely beaten up by British police during the protest and succumbed to his injuries a few days later. Lala Lajpat Rai is popularly known as Punjab Kesari, or the Lion of Punjab, for his protests against British rule and contribution to nation-building. He was elected President of the Indian National Congress in the Calcutta Special Session of 1920. In 1921, he founded Servants of the People Society, a non-profit welfare organization.

November 19	Birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi	(1917): Born on November 19, in an illustrious family, Smt. Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. She was the first female prime minister of India, serving for three consecutive terms (1966–77) and a fourth term from 1980 until she was assassinated in 1984. Her famous publications include 'The Years of Challenge' (1966-69), 'The Years of Endeavour' (1969-72), 'India' (London) in 1975. She was the recipient of Bharat Ratna in 1971, Mexican Academy Award for Liberation of Bangladesh (1972).
November 21	India's first rocket launch- Nike Apache	(1963): Nike-Apache was India's first rocket launch, which took place from the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station in Kerala. A joint Indian-American programme. The Nike Apache launch was an international effort under the United Nations.
November 24	The Martyrdom Day of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji	(1675): Commemorates the martyrdom of the ninth Sikh Guru, who was publicly beheaded for refusing to convert to Islam. Places of execution and cremation: Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib and Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib in Delhi.
November 25	The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	(1960): to honor the Mirabal sisters, three political activists from the Dominican Republic who were brutally murdered in 1960 by order of the country's ruler, Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961). (1993): The General Assembly adopts the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.
November 26	Adoption of the Indian Constitution	(1949): The Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect on 26th January 1950. Constitution Day, also known as 'Samvidhan Divas', is celebrated in India on 26th November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India.

November 29	Jehangir Ratanji D a d a b h o y Tata or J.R.D. Tata's death anniversary	JRD was born in Paris in 1904. 1938: When JRD was elevated to the top post in the Tata group, taking over as Chairman from Sir Nowroji Saklatvala. Awards: Including the Padma Vibhushan (1957), the Daniel Guggenheim Medal for aviation (1988), and the United Nations Population Award (1992). 1992: He received India's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna.
November 30	Birth Anniversary Of Jagdish Chandra Bose	(1858): Jagdish Chandra Bose was Born. Founded and directed (1917–37) the Bose Research Institute (now Bose Institute) in Calcutta. Bose proved that plants have life. The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) recognized Bose as the father of radio and wireless communication. In 1904, Bose became the first Asian who be awarded a US patent.

Probable MCQs

1. Which of the following is incorrect regarding Yakshagana, the classical dance-drama form?

- Yakshagana is a dance-drama form from Karnataka, primarily portraying mythological stories from the Puranas.
- It originated in Kerala and mainly focuses on historical events with minimal music.
- Yakshagana is a street performance that takes place during temple festivals in Tamil Nadu.
- The performers wear simple costumes and no makeup, focusing mainly on dialogues.

Answer: (b)

2. Consider the following statements regarding Birsa Munda:

- Birsa Munda was born in 1875 in the Munda tribe in the Chotanagpur region, now part of Jharkhand.
- He led the Ulgulan (The Great Tumult) movement from 1886 to 1890 to resist British control.
- Birsa Munda founded the Birsait faith, promoting the worship of one God and opposing animal sacrifice.

How many of the statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Answer:(c)

3. Which of the following is incorrect regarding the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize?

- (a) It was established in 1986 by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.
- (b) The award recognizes individuals and organizations worldwide for efforts in peace, disarmament, and development.
- (c) The 2023 winner, Daniel Barenboim, is an Indian environmental activist.
- (d) The objective of the award is to honor contributions to peace and sustainable development.

Answer: (c)

4. Which of the following is correct regarding the Cia-Cia language?

- (a) Cia-Cia is an indigenous language of the Philippines and is written using the Latin script.
- (b) The Cia-Cia language belongs to the Austronesian language family and is spoken by approximately 93,000 people in Indonesia.
- (c) The Cia-Cia language is primarily spoken in Malaysia and has a unique written script.
- (d) Cia-Cia is an indigenous language of Thailand with a rich history of literature and art.

Answer: (b)

5. The terms ‘Samis, Kvens, and Forest Finns’ sometimes mentioned in the news recently are related to:

- (a) Indigenous groups in South Africa
- (b) Norwegian ethnic minorities recognized by the government
- (c) Migrant communities in Brazil
- (d) Religious groups in Pakistan

Answer: (b)

CURRENT AFFAIRS IN NEWS: NOVEMBER (2024)

PLACES IN NEWS

PERSON IN NEWS

BOOKS IN NEWS

Places in News

Place	Brief Description
Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki:	- The Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki volcano located on a remote island in Indonesia erupted in earlier November 2024 and has resulted in ash clouds. - These clouds could pose a threat to flight operations and as a result, many airlines have cancelled their services nearby.
Manila, Philippines	- Philippines is an archipelago located in Southeast Asia, consisting of over 7,000 islands. - It lies in the western Pacific, east of Vietnam, south of Taiwan, and north of Indonesia. - It is bordered by the South China Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Celebes Sea. - Its capital, Manila, is on the western coast of the island of Luzon.
Valencia, Spain	- Recently, flash floods caused by heavy downpours in eastern Spain swept away almost everything in their path. - Valencia is located on Spain's eastern coast along the Mediterranean Sea. - Spain is located in the Southwest corner of Europe. - Spain shares land borders with Portugal to the west, France and Andorra to the north, and Gibraltar to the South. - Spain is bordered by the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic Sea to the east and south Ocean to the northwest.

Papua New Guinea



- **Papua New Guinea** is witnessing rising incidents of violence linked to sorcery accusations.
- Women are often brutally attacked or killed after being blamed for misfortunes or deaths in the community.

Kurram



- **In November 2024**, ethnic clashes in the **Kurram District** of Pakistan resulted in the killing of over 45 **Shia travellers** and **64 deaths** from sectarian violence between **Shia and Sunni groups** over three days.
- Kurram is located in **Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province**, bordering Afghanistan.

Nigeria



- Indian Prime Minister conferred the Nigerian national award - "**Grand Commander of the Order of Niger**"
- About Nigeria:
 - It is the **most populous country in Africa**.
 - **Physiography:** Several extensive plateaux (Jos Plateau, Udi Plateau); mountains (Mount Dimlang); lowlands (Sokoto plains, Chad Basin, etc.)
 - **Major Rivers:** Niger, Benue
 - **Major Lakes:** Lake Chad (freshwater lake bordering Nigeria, Chad and Niger)
 - It is the largest oil and gas producer in Africa.

Person in News

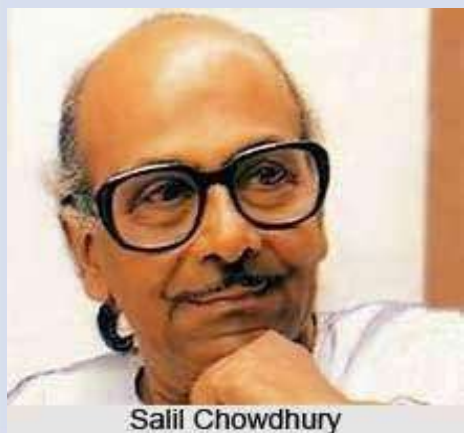
Name	Key Information
Atupurathu Mathew Abraham (Abu Abraham) 	● The year 2024 is marked as the 100th birth anniversary of Abu Abraham. ● He was one of India's finest political cartoonists
Duma Boko 	● He has been elected as the President of Botswana in November 2024 ● He is a leader of the Botswana National Front (BNF) and formed the government under the alliance of Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC). ● Botswana is a landlocked country located in Southern Africa.
Bibek Debroy 	● Bibek Debroy was a top economist who passed away recently. ● He was also the chairman of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM). ● He was also a member of NITI Aayog. ● He translated the complete Mahabharata into English in 10 volumes. He has also translated the Bhagavad Gita, the Harivamsa, the Vedas, and Valmiki's Ramayana (in three volumes). ● 2015: He was awarded Padam Shri.
Shashikant Ruia 	● He was a colossal figure in the world of industry ● He and his younger brother Ravi founded the Essar Group, which set up some of India's biggest projects, including a single-location oil refinery in Jamnagar in the late 90s.

Anil Pradhan



- He is the co-founder of the Young Tinker Foundation.
- He was awarded the third Rohini Nayyar Prize for Outstanding Contribution to Rural Development.
- The Rohini Nayyar Prize is presented by the Nayyar Foundation for Social and Economic Purpose in memory of Dr. Rohini Nayyar, a distinguished economist and bureaucrat who passed away in 2021.
- This prize includes a cash award of Rs. 10 lakhs, a citation, and a trophy, and is given annually to individuals under 40 years of age.

Salil Chowdhury



- Salil Chowdhury was a music director, musician, writer, and poet, who worked in Hindi, Bengali, and the South Indian film industries.
- He joined the Communist Party of India and became active in the Peasant Movement of 1945.
- He also worked in the Malayali Cinema.
- 1988 – Salil Chowdhury received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award

Prof CV Ramkrishnan



- Prof CVR, as he was popularly known, founded the Department of Biochemistry at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (MSU), in Vadodara in 1955.
- Dr Vikram Sarabhai Institute of Cell and Molecular Biology, established in 2012 at MSU, was under his mentorship.

Pandit Ram Narayan



- Pandit Ram Narayan, who gave Sarangi a classical stature, and made it global, dies at 96.
- He is an Indian musician who popularized the bowed instrument sarangi as a concert solo instrument in Hindustani classical music and became the first internationally successful sarangi player.
- Narayan received the three national Padma Awards: Padma Shri in 1976, Padma Bhushan in 1991, and Padma Vibhushan in 2005.
- Narayan was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, the highest Indian recognition given to practicing artists, in 1975.

TPG Nambiar



- Indian electronic company BPL Group founder T.P. Gopalan Nambiar passed away.
- He established BPL (earlier known as British Physical Laboratories) in 1963 in Kerala.
- A pioneer of India's consumer electronics brand in the 1990s.

K. Sanjay Murthy



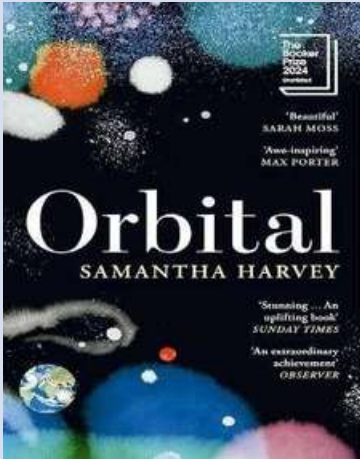
- The president of India appointed him the new Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).
- He will replace Girish Chandra Murmu.
- The appointment was made under Article 148(1) of the Indian Constitution.

Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad

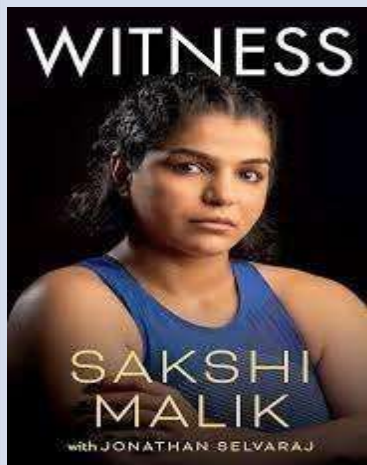


- Daniel Barenboim, a classical pianist and conductor, and Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian peace activist, were awarded the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023.
- Daniel Barenboim was recognized for his significant contributions to fostering peace through musical and cultural dialogue initiatives.
- Ali Abu Awwad was honored for his advocacy of dialogue and non-violence through his organization, Roots, which he founded after spending time in prison.

Book in News

Title	Author	Description
Orbital 	Samantha Harvey	● He is a British author, who won the prestigious Booker Prize for Fiction in November 2024. ● This book is a story set aboard the International Space Station that explores Earth's fragility and beauty.

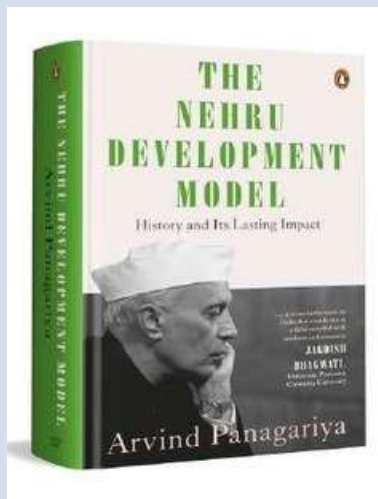
Witness



Sakshi Malik and Jonathan Selvaraj

- One of India's top women wrestlers Sakshi Malik wrote a memoir in which she gives an "honest account" of her life — the highs, lows, and everything in between.

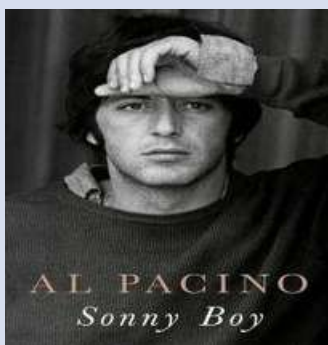
The Nehru Development Model



Arvind Panagariya

- This book by renowned economist and policymaker Arvind Panagariya is an attempt to systematically document the economic history of the Nehru era and its impact on contemporary economic thought and post- Nehru economic policymaking.

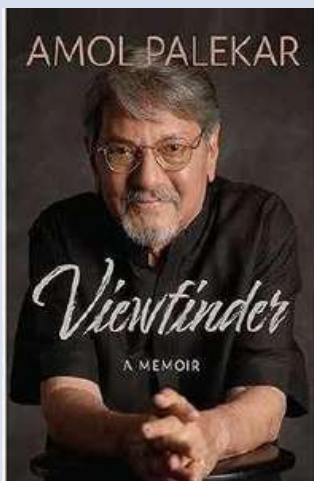
Sonny Boy



Al Pacino

- It is a personal memoir that shares stories from his life, career, and acting.
- It talks about his early struggles, his time in theater, and how he became a Hollywood star.

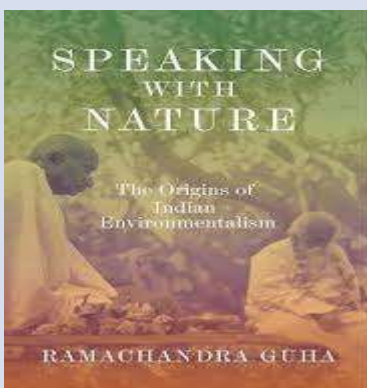
Viewfinder



Amol Palekar

- It captures the many lives Palekar has lived as a painter, theatre artist, actor, writer, and movie director.

Speaking with Nature: The Origins of Indian Environmentalism



Ramachandra Guha

- The book focuses on the lives and contributions of ten influential thinkers in India who advocated for ecological balance and sustainable development long before these concepts became globally recognized.

2024: The election that surprised India



Rajdeep Sardesai

- The book examines the political dynamics, key players, and voter behavior leading to the unexpected outcomes.
- Sardesai offers insightful analysis of the strategies employed by various political parties. It highlights the surprising twists and turns in the election campaign and its impact on India's future.