



**DR. RAJKUMAR ACADEMY  
BENGALURU**

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# WEEKLY NEWS COMPILATION

A CRISP AND COMPREHENSIVE CURRENT AFFAIRS CAPSULE

**NOVEMBER WEEK 2**

10-11-2025 TO 15-11-2025

**ADITYA-L1 GETS  
A CLOSE LOOK  
AT ERUPTIONS  
FROM THE SUN**

**GUJARAT'S  
AMBAJI MARBLE  
GETS GI TAG**

**CLIMATE RISK  
INDEX (CRI) 2026**

**STATE RECORDS  
24% DROP IN  
MATERNAL DEATHS**

**NPCI ARM,  
BENEFIT SIGN  
PACT**

**❖ Ensuring mills pay what is mandated is a tough task**

**Context: This is owing to the ownership pattern of sugar mills in Karnataka, many of which are owned by powerful families from across the political spectrum, and the prevailing Central laws.**

- The Karnataka government managed to mediate and end the nine-day farmers' protest in the northern districts by announcing an additional ₹100 in the fair and remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane, which now stands at ₹3,300, including ₹50 each to be contributed by the State government and sugar mills.
- However, given the ownership pattern of sugar mills in the State, with many being owned by powerful families from across the political spectrum, and the prevailing Central laws, the truce looks fragile.
- The order on the revised FRP was issued after over several rounds of discussions with farmers, and the Chief Minister's meeting with farmers and mill representatives. The farmers had demanded ₹3,500 per tonne apart from cutting and transportation charges.
- The challenge before the State government now is to make the factories pay the mandated price of ₹3,250 per tonne for a sugar recovery rate of 10.25% across the State. The Centre had fixed FRP of ₹3,400 per tonne last year, and the factories paid between ₹2,700 and ₹2,900 per tonne, apart from cutting and transport charges.

**Reluctance to pay**

- Government sources say that some factory owners, including the Nirani brothers — Murugesh Nirani, former Minister and BJP leader, and Hanumant Nirani, MLC — strongly opposed the Chief Minister's suggestion. They argued that a ₹50 increase in the base price meant a loss of ₹100 crore and that their conglomerate would not be able to absorb it.

**• In Karnataka, of the total 81 sugar mills, one is in the public sector and 11 in the cooperative sector. The rest are in the private sector.**

- The Nirani family alone controls around 20 factories in north and south Karnataka. Most of the privately owned/ managed sugar mills are with highly influential political families, either associated with the Congress or the BJP and in some cases both, which has historically prevented governments from taking tough decisions.

**2025 FRP**

**• The 2025 FRP order issued by the Centre considers a basic sugar recovery of 10.25%, up from the 2024 FRP order that fixed 9.5% as the basic recovery rate. The 2025 order asks factories to pay ₹34.6 extra, for every one percent increase in recovery. Factories can deduct a similar amount in case of lower recoveries.**

- Recovery is a complex issue and depends on the variety of the crop, the time of harvesting, and use of efficient machinery in the factories.

- Another former Minister and BJP leader Ramesh Jarkiholi, whose family owns or manages a few sugar factories, said that the average recovery in Karnataka is only 10.5%, while the average recovery in Maharashtra is between 11% and 12%.
- “Only factories that get higher recovery of sugar can pay higher prices, which we cannot,” he said. His brother Satish Jarkiholi is a Minister in the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government.

### **What laws regulate**

- The guiding laws are another issue. “The sugar mill owners reminded the State government that most laws regulating sugar and sugarcane were Central Acts.
- The policies and executive orders controlling export of sugar and byproducts, and ethanol blending were issued and modified by the Centre, they said.
- A factory owner from Belagavi said that his two units had multi-State licences and were regulated by the Central Sugar Ministry and not the State government,” a senior officer and member of the Karnataka Agricultural Price Commission said.
- This subtly indicated the owners’ stance on the State government’s role in handling sugarcane protest by pointing out at its limited jurisdiction. “Most millers were reluctant to follow the government’s instructions on higher prices,” admitted an official.

### **Alternative crops**

- There have been in recent years some experiments for promoting alternative sugar-yielding crops. Nirani Sugars is encouraging the cultivation of red sorghum, a 90-day crop for sugar production on pilot plots in Bagalkot and Vijayapura.
- This is a short-duration crop compared to the 12-month long sugarcane. It is easier to harvest and the sugar recovery is as good as sugarcane.
- “This may lead to reduced dependence on sugarcane in northern Karnataka districts where rainfall is less than 800 mm,” said an official from the factory in Mudhol in Bagalkot district.

### **Cost of cultivation**

- Two reports submitted by agricultural economists of the University of Agriculture Sciences, Dharwad and Bengaluru, to **the Karnataka Agricultural Price Commission put the cost of cultivation of sugarcane at ₹55,000 per acre for own land and ₹80,000 per acre for leased land.**
- The Indian Sugar Mills Association has urged the Union government to hike the minimum support price of sugar to ₹40.2 per kg, as the production cost of sugar at the FRP of ₹3,550 per tonne of sugarcane comes to ₹40.2 per kg. They point out that the MSP now stands at ₹31, as last revised in 2019. ISMA members say the cost of producing ethanol from molasses was ₹66 and from sugar was ₹70. These are less than or equal to the procurement prices.

## ❖ Schemes for Brahmin community

**Context: Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao has announced new initiatives under the Vipra Self-Employment Direct Loan Scheme during the Acharyatraya Jayanthi celebration held in Bengaluru recently.**

- Under this scheme, members of the Brahmin community can avail themselves of loans up to ₹2 lakh to start self-employment ventures. Beneficiaries will receive a 20% subsidy, while the remaining amount is repayable at 4% interest over 34 installments.
- R.V. Deshpande, chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission, launched the Chanakya Administrative Training Scheme aimed at encouraging Brahmin graduates to prepare for IAS/KAS exams.
- The scheme offers up to ₹1 lakh in fee reimbursement through Direct Benefit Transfer.

## ❖ Aditya-L1 gets a close look at eruptions from the sun

**Context: Scientists from IIA and NASA study very first spectroscopic observations of coronal mass ejection in the visible wavelength range; the solar observatory is expected to observe more such eruptions.**

- Using the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) payload aboard India's first dedicated space-based solar mission, Aditya-L1, scientists at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), along with NASA, have collaborated to estimate the crucial parameters of a coronal mass ejection (CME), very close to its lift-off from the sun.
- Scientists associated with the project said that these are the very first spectroscopic observations of a CME in the visible wavelength range.
- They said that the unique spectroscopic observations with the VELC has let them study the CMEs very close to the sun's visible surface itself, for the first time.
- "In addition, it provides a sustained view of the sun for 24 hours every day because of being at the sun-earth Lagrangian L1 location where the sun never sets," they said.
- Taking advantage of these factors, V. Muthupriyal, VELC project scientist, and her colleagues at the VELC payload operations centre at the IIA estimated the electron density, energy, mass, temperature and speed of a CME very close to the sun.



**Solar study:** PSLV-C57, carrying India's maiden solar mission Aditya-L1, lifts off from Sriharikota on September 2, 2023. PTI

### **Vital statistics**

- R. Ramesh, senior Professor at the IIA and principal investigator of the VELC project, the observations are by far the closest to the sun where spectroscopic observations of a CME in the visible wavelength range have been obtained with a space coronagraph.
- His team calculated that there are about 370 million electrons per cubic centimetre in the CME observed with the VELC. The corresponding number for the non-CME corona near the sun is much less, in the range 10-100 million electrons per cubic centimetre.

- “The CME energy in the present case is approximately  $9.4 \times 10^{21}$  joules. The mass in the CME is nearly 270 million tons. For comparison, the mass of the iceberg that sank the Titanic is estimated to be 1.5 million tons. The initial speed of the CME is 264 km/sec. The CME temperature is 1.8 million degrees on the Kelvin scale,” Professor Ramesh said.

### ***More eruptions***

- He added that though there are observations of CMEs at comparatively larger distances from the sun, with instruments other than the VELC, an understanding of the parameters of a CME in relation to how much is lost from the sun during a CME per se is crucial, and the unique near-sun spectroscopic observations with the VELC is precisely providing us the necessary data.
- Professor Ramesh added that with the sun nearing the maximum activity phase of the current sunspot cycle 25 and with the VELC now stabilised in its operations, more energetic eruptions from the sun are expected to be observed.

### **❖ Transparency must in issues of religious oppression: SC judge**

**Context: The Supreme Court Judge Justice Sanjay Kumar has observed that the state must show obvious transparency and fairness while dealing with issues involving religious oppression and secularism.**

- “India has developed its own interpretation of secularism, wherein the state neither supports any religion nor penalises the profession and practice of any faith. This being the ideal, the state machinery must tailor its actions accordingly but the inescapable fact remains that such state machinery ultimately comprises members of different religions and communities.
- Therefore, transparency and fairness in their actions must be manifest in matters even remotely touching upon secularism and religious oppression,” Justice Kumar wrote in a recent order.
- Justice Kumar’s remarks came in his separate opinion rejecting a plea by the Maharashtra government to review a September 2025 judgment of the Supreme Court.
- The judgment had directed the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT), comprising equal parts Muslim and Hindu police officers, to investigate allegations of murder and assault made by a 17-year-old Muslim boy against the backdrop of the Akola riots of 2023.
- Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, the second judge on the Bench, agreed with the State government, and concluded that the judgment required a re-look, thus rendering a split opinion on the review petition.
- The case concerned a complaint made by a teenager, Mohammad Afzal Mohammad Sharif, who allegedly witnessed four men attacking a man in an autorickshaw during riots in May 2023.
- The men assaulted the boy, leaving him with head injuries. But Afzal mustered the courage to go to the police station to file a complaint about the murder and the assault on him. However, the police had taken no notice of him.
- The murder victim was later identified as Vilas Mahadevrao Gaikwad, who had been plying the autorickshaw owned by a Muslim. Afzal had stated that Gaikwad was killed under the mistaken impression that he was a Muslim.

**Context: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday said that the State Cabinet has approved a Bill to ban polygamy, for which convicts may face up to seven years of rigorous imprisonment.**

- However, there may be some exceptions for the Sixth Schedule areas.
- Addressing a press conference after a Cabinet meeting here, Mr. Sarma said the government will also create a new fund to compensate the victims of polygamy so that they do not face hardship in continuing with their lives.
- **“The Assam Cabinet today approved a Bill to ban polygamy. The Bill will be called ‘The Assam Prohibition of Polygamy Bill, 2025’. It will be tabled in the Assembly on November 25,”** he added.
- Climate change, imbalance in fertilizer use impacts soil’s organic carbon: ICAR studyA detailed study conducted by eight scientists of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), including its Director-General, Mangi Lal Jat, has found that the unscientific use of fertilizers and climate change are contributing to degradation of organic carbon in arable areas of the country.
- The study, primarily coordinated by the ICAR’s Indian Institute of Soil Science in Bhopal, has used 2,54,236 soil samples from 620 districts covering 29 States to reach the conclusions. A research paper based on the six-year study started in 2017 has been published now in the England-based international research journal Land Degradation & Development.
- Organic carbon was not only part of the chemistry of the soil, but it covered all the aspects of the physics, chemistry and biology of soil. He said a study published by the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organisation about 25 years ago flagged this issue, but the samples were very low.
- “In this study, we have taken samples extensively, and the sample collection was well designed. We have covered both arable and barren land, mostly arable land,” he said.

### **Carbon dynamics**

- The study has found that if the organic carbon is low, then the deficiency of micronutrients in the soil is high, and if the organic carbon is high, the deficiency is low. The team used an earlier study that said rainfall and temperature determined organic carbon.
- “We correlated this across the country. We found that organic carbon is highly correlated with the elevation. If the elevation of the land is high, then the organic carbon content is high. But if we move from hills to low land, then the organic carbon content is low,” he added.
- Mr. Shukla said organic soil carbon is negatively correlated with temperature. “For example, in Rajasthan and Telangana, the temperature is very high and their organic carbon content is low,” he added.
- The study noted that irrespective of the crops and cropping patterns, temperature, rainfall and elevation are the three important factors which decide the organic carbon concentration in the soil. The team of scientists developed an ‘agri-ecological base’ map to assess the impact of cropping systems and the use of fertilizers on organic carbon.
- The scientists have prepared a map which can help in making policy decisions, particularly for the carbon credit and assessing the land degradation.

- “We found that wherever imbalanced fertilizer application was there, then the organic carbon contained in the soil had declined. Haryana, Punjab, and parts of western Uttar Pradesh have intensified the fertilizer application, skewed towards urea and phosphorus, which was mostly scientific application, and it has negatively impacted organic carbon in the soil,” the scientist added.
- The study noted that climate change also has an impact on organic carbon. “If the temperature is rising, then there are chances that soil organic carbon will decline further in future, and that will not only impact soil health, but will also impact the carbon credit and heat emission from soil.” Mr. Shukla said.

### ❖ COP30: beginner’s guide on what to expect from the climate summit

**Context: COP30 is being called the ‘Implementation COP’ because it is expected to translate commitments into action. Guided by the Global Stocktake, the summit focuses on energy, industry, and transport transitions; stewardship of forests, oceans, and biodiversity; and transformation of food systems.**

- A decade has passed since the member countries of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted the Paris Agreement — a milestone global pact that committed them to keeping the world’s average surface temperature from rising well under 2°C and striving to limit it to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- However, climate finance has lagged, global emissions continue to rise, and the gap between pledges and practice has only widened since.
- Against the backdrop of record-breaking heat, intensifying climate impacts, and mounting public frustration with global inaction, the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) to the UNFCCC begins in Belém, Brazil, today.
- It is both symbolic and strategic that COP30 is being hosted in Belém, which is a point of entry to the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon is one of the world’s largest and most important carbon sinks (estimated at 150-200 billion tonnes) and biodiversity reserves on the planet — and it is threatened by deforestation and land conversion to non-forest use. As a result, it is tipping towards irreversible decline.
- Equity and inclusion are central to climate negotiations. But paradoxically, even before the negotiations began, COP30 faced an unexpected test: inclusion. This is because Belém has limited logistical options, leaving hotel room rates to skyrocket and rendering it difficult for representatives from low-income nations and civil society organisations to participate. Such logistical exclusions have, in some ways, undercut the moral weight of the process.

#### **‘Implementation COP’**

- For starters, COP30 is being called the ‘Implementation COP’ because it is expected to be a watershed event where commitments are expected to be translated into concrete action. Guided by the Global Stocktake (GST) — which is a mandatory review that countries have to undertake every five years to assess their progress on addressing climate change, identify gaps, and draft plans — COP30 is expected to advance mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation.
- Its programme will thus focus on six key areas, including energy, industry, and transport transitions; stewardship of forests, oceans, and biodiversity; transformation

of food systems; resilience in cities, infrastructure, and water; and human and social development.

- The Baku-to-Belém Roadmap on Climate Finance is a plan led by the COP presidency, developed by Azerbaijan and Brazil under the UNFCCC's guidance, to show how countries and institutions could scale finance for developing nations to at least \$1.3 trillion a year by 2035.
- It's less a binding pledge and more a menu of actions to inform negotiations after the \$300-billion New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) decision at COP29. Now, as the first major stocktake after the Roadmap, participants are looking at COP30 to set a new collective goal for 2035. In addition to revisiting emission reduction and climate finance goals, it's also expected to reaffirm the fact that protecting forests and indigenous communities is central to global climate resilience.

Ultimately, COP30 will seek to mobilise all actors to accelerate climate action.

### **Adaptation in negotiations**

- Climate adaptation is imperative for the survival of millions of people in the Global South. But because adaptation is context-specific, what works in a coastal delta is unlikely to work in a mountain village. As a result, negotiations surrounding the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) have been difficult. The GGA aims to establish quantifiable goals and metrics for resilience, organise funding that matches the need, and create a system for accounting and quantifying adaptation outcomes. This long-delayed framework is expected to be established at COP30.
- As discussions progress, experts around the world emphasise the need to consider local and indigenous knowledge systems in this process. Across India, for example, traditional seed varieties, water-harvesting structures, and community-based ecosystem restoration efforts offer proven models of resilience.

### **Finance: the missing piece**

- Under the Paris Agreement, economically developed countries pledged \$100 billion per year to finance climate action in developing nations. At COP29, a breakthrough agreement called the NCQG on Climate Finance was reached. This target is expected to triple climate finance from \$100 billion to \$300 billion annually by 2035 and scale up finance from all actors, both public and private, to \$1.3 trillion per year by 2035.
- However, it should be noted that the \$300 billion is significantly less than the estimated trillions of dollars needed by economically developing countries, with the latter arguing that the use of "all actors" to scale up finance has diluted the common but differentiated responsibilities principle, which also includes historical emissions. "All actors" means every potential source of climate finance, not just developed-country governments. It lumps together public treasuries, multilateral development banks, private investors, philanthropies, sub-national authorities, and even developing countries own private sectors.
- The Loss and Damage Fund, set up in COP28, is also grossly underfunded, receiving less than a billion dollars against an annual need running into hundreds of billions of dollars. For developing countries, this finance is an enabler of ambition, enhancing preparedness for extreme climate events, expanding climate-resilient agriculture, and accelerating the adoption of renewable energy.

- COP30 is expected to finalise the reporting requirements and financing arrangements under the NCQG. One looming question at Belém is: will a credible pathway emerge for moving from the \$300 billion to the \$1.3 trillion target and build confidence in developing countries? And will Belém also finalise the modalities of finance: who will pay, who will gain, and how it will be accounted for?

### **Transition and ambition**

- Transitions must be fair as economies move towards net zero (i.e. that humans add no net greenhouse gases to the atmosphere over a period; emissions are reduced almost to zero, and any residual sources are balanced by removals, e.g. restoring forests and carbon capture) — and transformation can't be fuelled solely by finance. Access to reasonably priced technology and capacity building are equally important for many developing countries, be it efficient water systems, resilient crops, or clean energy, which are frequently hindered by high costs or intellectual property issues.
- Beyond promises, COP30 should lead to North-South collaborations for training, innovation, and technology sharing. Otherwise, climate transition runs the risk of becoming yet another area of inequality. In countries like India, investments in low-carbon manufacturing, renewable energy, ecosystem restoration, green skills development, small businesses, and alternative livelihoods must all be part of a “just transition.”
- Countries were expected to update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through 2035 and submit them by February 2025. However, according to Climate Action Tracker, many countries are yet to submit their reports. The ones submitted so far account for only 19% of global emissions.
- Negotiations at COP30 are expected to address the insufficient ambition of climate targets and reveal whether countries are prepared to put aside rhetoric and match science and ambition, a significant challenge in the absence of climate finance.

### **Climate-nature nexus**

- A key spotlight of Belém is the long-overdue integration of climate and biodiversity agendas. Brazil is pushing for an innovative financing model for conservation, known as the ‘Tropical Forest Forever Facility’. The proposal aims to compensate more than 70 developing countries with tropical forests for their efforts to preserve them.
- This growing recognition that climate and biodiversity crises are interlinked could make climate finance more effective, directing funds to ecosystem restoration, agroforestry, and community-led conservation.

### **India at COP30**

- At Belém, India will be championing climate justice and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, urging developed nations to take the lead in emission cuts and financial support. In fact, at the mid-year climate talks in Bonn, India played a pivotal role in coordinating the G77+China bloc of developing countries to advocate for a fair and predictable finance goal under the NCQG framework.
- This positioning reinforces India's role as both a responsible power and a representative of broader southern concerns while serving as a bridge between the Global North and South.

- However, while India's domestic targets are ambitious, efforts in the institutional landscape remain a work in progress, as reflected in initiatives such as green budgeting, sovereign green bonds, and the proposed national carbon market expected by 2026.
- This gap must be viewed in the context of India's developmental realities, which continue to shape its climate choices and actions.
- The stakes could not be higher at COP30. The Amazon setting underscores the urgency of protecting the world's ecosystems while tackling emissions. For India, it is a moment to shape the conversation, striking a balance between domestic imperatives and global responsibilities.
- What unfolds in Belém will go a long way towards determining whether the international community can still bend the curve of emissions and whether emerging economies, such as India, can secure the space and support they need for economic growth that is resilient to climate change.



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## ❖ India and China have goodwill towards us, says Sri Lankan PM

**Context: India and China have shown enormous goodwill towards Sri Lanka and recognise the island nation as an important partner, Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya said.**

- In an interview to marking **one year of the National People's Power (NPP) government**, she said that bringing stability and fostering a new political culture were the government's biggest successes, even as taking the state machinery along remained a challenge.
- On the ongoing IMF programme and the hardships facing ordinary Sri Lankans since the economic crash three years ago, she said the government could not renegotiate the entire agreement due to the risk of chaos and destabilisation, but had managed to revise certain aspects.
- Weighing in on justice and reconciliation for war-affected Tamils, she stressed the importance of a "home-grown process", rooted in trust-building, to address wartime human rights violations.
- While economic stability remains a priority the government is also committed to introducing a new Constitution through "a consultative approach", Ms. Amarasuriya added.

## ❖ K-RERA declares BDA a 'promoter'

**Context: The Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) has held that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is a 'promoter' under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA).**

- In a landmark ruling, the Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) has held that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is a 'promoter' under **the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA)**.
- In a case against them, the BDA had sought exemption from the jurisdiction of the RERA contending that applying the RERA to its schemes would disrupt its statutory duties and financial structure. But the K-RERA dismissed the plea.
- Further, the authority directed the BDA to register its flagship Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) as a real estate project within two weeks. The authority directed the BDA to upload all project-related documents, including sanctioned plans, layout approvals, progress reports, and financial disclosures, and refrain from any sale, marketing, or creation of third-party interests in the layout until registration is complete.
- **The K-RERA also granted the BDA three weeks to explain why penalty proceedings under Section 59(1) should not be initiated for violation of Section 3 of the Act, which mandates project registration before advertisement or sale.**
- The Full Bench of the K-RERA, comprising Chairman Rakesh Singh and member G.R. Reddy, delivered the order on November 7, while hearing a batch of complaints filed by allottees alleging serious breaches by the BDA in the development and allotment of sites under the NPKL scheme.

- The complainants, led by Ramachandra Nayak and others, accused the BDA of violating multiple provisions of the RERA Act. They alleged that although the BDA had collected full or substantial payments from allottees between 2015 and 2016, it failed to complete essential infrastructure such as roads, water supply, sewerage, electricity, and parks, rendering the layout uninhabitable. The complainants further stated that despite these lapses, the BDA continued to invite applications for additional sites and levied arbitrary penalties and interest on allottees for delayed payments. They argued that the BDA's conduct squarely fell within the purview of the RERA and that the authority's non-registration of the project was unlawful.

### **BDA's defence**

- In its defence, the BDA argued that it is a statutory authority constituted under the Bangalore Development Authority Act, 1976, which governs urban planning and land development within the city.
- The authority claimed that layout formation and site allotment were part of planned city development and public welfare functions, not commercial real estate activities, and therefore outside the scope of the RERA.
- The **BDA maintained that the relationship between the authority and allottees was governed by the BDA (Allotment of Sites) Rules, 1984, and that disputes should be resolved under those rules.** It also contended that applying the RERA to its schemes would disrupt its statutory duties and financial structure, as funds from site allotments were used for citywide development and not confined to a single project.

### **K-RERA's findings**

- However, the **K-RERA rejected the BDA's arguments in totality. The authority held that the definition of 'promoter' under Section 2(zk) of the RERA Act explicitly includes any development authority or public body that develops and sells plots or apartments to the public.**
- Citing a 2019 clarification from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs which included the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) under the same definition, the K-RERA ruled that the BDA clearly falls within the scope of a promoter.
- The authority clarified that the RERA applies even to government agencies when they engage in real estate transactions. "The purpose of the RERA is transparency, accountability, and consumer protection and not profit control," the order stated. "Even welfare or non-profit schemes are subject to the RERA when plots or flats are sold to the public."

## ❖ State records 24% drop in maternal deaths

**Context: Karnataka has recorded a 24% reduction in maternal deaths this year compared to the corresponding period in 2024.**

- While 483 maternal deaths were reported in the first 10 months of 2024, the number reduced to 366.
- Karnataka has recorded a 24% reduction in maternal deaths this year — from January to October — compared to the corresponding period in 2024.
- While 483 maternal deaths were reported in the first 10 months of 2024, the number has come down to 366 in 2025.
- This follows strict monitoring and audit of every maternal death by a State-level committee that was set up in the aftermath of the Ballari maternal deaths in November last year, according to Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao.



### **Mission zero**

- He said to further improve the quality and safety of maternal and newborn care across health facilities, the Health Department had launched the “Mission Zero Preventable Maternal Deaths” initiative.
- As part of this ongoing effort, the State had now issued a new Government Order (GO) to rationalise and optimally deploy key specialists — obstetricians, anaesthetists, and paediatricians — across Karnataka.
- The move aimed to ensure that every taluk hospital and well-performing community health centre (CHC) provided round the clock comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care (CEmONC) services, Mr. Gundu Rao said.
- According to the GO, all 147 taluk hospitals and 42 well-performing CHCs (those conducting 30 or more deliveries a month) will be strengthened as CEmONC centres.
- Each centre will have two specialists each in obstetrics, anaesthesia, and paediatrics, along with a radiologist and a physician. Remote areas such as M.M. Hills will continue as full CEmONC facilities, given their hard-to-reach terrain and distance from other referral centres.

### **Tamil Nadu model**

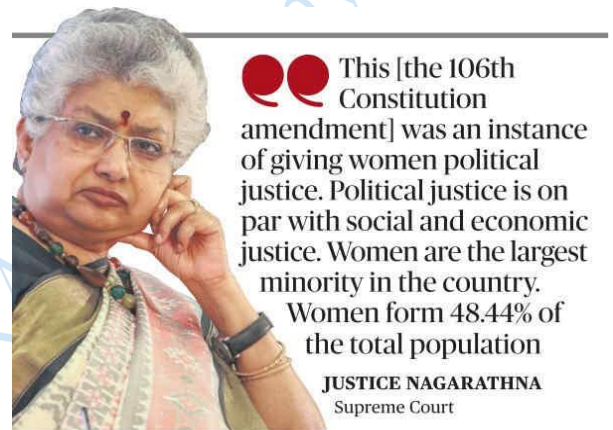
- Harsh Gupta, Principal Secretary, Health, said the rationalisation exercise was based on the Tamil Nadu model.
- “The redeployment will be done through counselling. To achieve equitable distribution of specialists, those currently serving in low-performing CHCs will be redeployed to high-delivery-load facilities. The government will also mobilise 404 medical officers from the existing sanctioned posts. Nurses from underperforming 24/7 primary health centres (PHCs) will be reassigned to strengthen delivery points,” he said, adding that Tamil Nadu had been following this model for four years.
- The Minister also said 104 new radiologist posts and 23 physician posts had been created additionally.

- At the district level, 125 super-specialist posts — including cardiologists, neurologists, nephrologists, oncologists, pulmonologists, and critical care specialists — would be created under the Compulsory Medical Service Scheme to manage advanced maternal and newborn complications, he said.
- He said the exercise will be implemented under Rule 15(1)(c) of the Karnataka Civil Services (Regulation of Transfer of Medical Officers and Other Staff) Rules, 2025. The initiative is designed to be budget-neutral, relying on redeployment and transfers from existing sanctioned posts, he said.

## ❖ SC says women are the ‘largest minority’, notes their receding presence in Parliament

**Context: The Supreme Court has said women are the “largest minority” in India and their presence in Parliament is steadily receding.**

- “Why not give women representation even without reservation,” Justice B.V. Nagarathna, the Supreme Court’s sole woman judge heading a two-judge Bench, observed.
- The Bench, including Justice R. Mahadevan, was hearing a petition filed by Jaya Thakur challenging the provisions of the “Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam”, or the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, granting 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies.
- The law was assented to by President Droupadi Murmu in September 2023, but is yet to be implemented, senior advocate Shobha Gupta and advocate Varun Thakur, submitted in court.



### **“Why delay the ‘vandan’,” Ms. Gupta asked.**

- “This [the Constitution amendment] was an instance of giving women political justice. Political justice is on par with social and economic justice. Women are the largest minority in the country. Women form 48.44% of the total population,” Justice Nagarathna observed.
- She pointed to Article 15(3) of the Constitution which mandates the State to take affirmative action and make special provisions for the empowerment of women.
- The provisions of the 2023 law would be implemented only after the conduct of the next census and the subsequent delimitation exercise — redrawing of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies — to determine seats to be reserved for women.
- The quota for women in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies would continue for 15 years and Parliament could later extend the benefit period.

### **‘Long-pending demand’**

- “A Constitutional amendment cannot be held back for an uncertain period... For the last 75 years there has been no adequate representation of women in Parliament as well as in the State legislatures. This has been a long-pending demand for decades,” the petition submitted.

- Ms. Gupta said the Act did not give any specific time period about the census or the delimitation exercise.
- Senior counsel echoed the court's oral observation about the need for census as a pre-condition to reserve seats for women.
- Justice Nagarathna said the census would quantify the population, based on which the seats would be scientifically reserved for women.

### ❖ India and Vietnam move to strengthen defence ties

**Context: Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh met Vietnam's Minister of National Defence, General Phan Van Giang, on the sidelines of the 15th India-Vietnam Defence Policy Dialogue in Hanoi.**

- He conveyed warm greetings from Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and reaffirmed India's commitment to further strengthening defence cooperation with Vietnam.
- During the dialogue, co-chaired by Mr. Rajesh Singh and Vietnam's Deputy Minister of National Defence Senior Lieutenant-General Hoang Xuan Chien, both sides reviewed ongoing defence engagements and explored new areas of collaboration.

### MoA signed

- A memorandum of agreement on Mutual Submarine Search and Rescue Support and Cooperation and a letter of intent on Defence Industry Cooperation were signed.
- The discussions underscored that defence partnership continues to be a key pillar of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam, a press statement said.

### ❖ Ministry simplifies rules to boost cornea transplant services

**Context: A notification was issued on Nov. 6 removing mandatory requirement of clinical specular equipment in corneal transplantation centres.**

- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has amended the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues (Amendment) Rules, 2025 to boost cornea donation and transplant services across the country. A notification in this regard was issued on November 6 under the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994.
- The mandatory requirement of the clinical specular equipment in corneal transplantation centres has now been removed under this amendment. Clinical specular microscopes are used to assess the health and density of corneal endothelial cells.
- "This change has been introduced after careful consideration of expert recommendations and stakeholder consultations," said a release issued by the Ministry on Monday. It added that the move also aligns with the government's vision to promote equitable access to organ and tissue transplantation services.
- The amendment strengthens the National Organ Transplant Programme (NOTP) and streamlines functioning of corneal transplantation centres, the Ministry added.

- It said the amendment is expected to ease infrastructure and operational challenges, particularly for smaller eye centres in rural and semi-urban areas. A corneal transplant is a surgical procedure to replace a damaged or diseased cornea with healthy donor tissue to restore vision and reduce pain.
- The cornea is the clear, front part of the eye that helps focus light; when it becomes cloudy or scarred from injury, infection, or certain medical conditions, vision can be significantly impaired. The transplant can involve replacing the entire cornea or just the affected layers.
- As per an article published in the Indian Journal of Ophthalmology, titled Corneal blindness in India: The care gap, corneal blindness has been the second-leading cause of blindness in the over-50 age group in India. It said the country has an estimated 1.2 million corneal blind persons.

### ❖ Petition in SC says GenAI may lead to fake case laws

**Context: The Supreme Court agreed to list after a fortnight a petition saying indiscriminate use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in judicial work could lead to “hallucinations”, resulting in fictitious judgments and research material, and even perpetuate bias.**

- Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, before whose Bench the case came up, reacted that the judges were aware and vocal about the incursions made by AI in judicial functioning.
- Kartikeya Rawal, an advocate represented by his counsel, Abhinav Shrivastava, urged the top court to formulate a strict policy or, at least, frame guidelines for regulated, transparent, secure and uniform use of GenAI in courts, tribunals and other quasi-judicial bodies until a law was put in place.
- The petition warned the opaque use of AI and Machine Learning technologies in the judicial system and governance would trigger constitutional and human rights concerns. The judiciary must avail only data free from bias, and the ownership of that data must be transparent enough to ensure stakeholders’ liability.
- “The skill of GenAI to leverage advanced neural networks and unsupervised learning to generate new data, uncover hidden patterns, and automate complex processes can lead to ‘hallucinations’, resulting in fake case laws, AI bias, and lengthy observations... This process of hallucinations would mean that GenAI would not be based on precedents but on a law that might not even exist,” the petition submitted.
- GenAI was capable of producing original content based on prompts or query. It could create realistic images, generate content such as graphics and text, answer questions, explain complex concepts, and convert language into code. GenAI algorithms could also “replicate, perpetuate, aggravate” pre-existing biases, discrimination, and stereotypical practices, raising ethical challenges, Mr. Rawal said.

## ❖ Centre yet again seeks auto industry inputs on EV import policy

**Context: The policy failed to attract bidders before last month's deadline expired; industry given three weeks' time to submit its recommendations.**

- The government has once again invited suggestions from the auto industry on its electric vehicle (EV) import policy, which offers duty concessions in exchange for local manufacturing commitments, after failing to attract any bidders before last month's deadline expired.
- In June, the government invited auto players to submit their interest for the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars (SPMEPC) in India, which permits automakers to import up to 8,000 EVs at a reduced duty rate of 15%, compared with the current 70-100%, provided they commit to invest ₹4,150 crore in local EV manufacturing.
- However, the deadline for submissions, which ended on October 21, passed without a single applicant. Subsequently, the Ministry of Heavy Industries held a round of consultation with the auto industry in the last week of October, seeking suggestions. "If these suggestions are viable, we may reopen [the application window]," a government official said.
- The industry has been given three weeks to submit recommendations to the policy. To a question on why auto players did not show interest, the official said one of the reasons was the ongoing negotiations for India-EU trade agreement and the import concessions that could be offered under it.
- The government has also received suggestions to include ICE vehicles under the scheme. However, the official said while "minor changes could be made, the fundamentals cannot be altered."

## ❖ E-com sites may have to disclose country of origin of goods sold

**Context: A set of draft rules released on Monday by the Union Department of Consumer Affairs has proposed to make it mandatory for e-commerce platforms to provide 'searchable and sortable filters' based on the 'country of origin' for packaged commodities sold online.**

- "This will enhance consumer empowerment and transparency in online shopping," the government said in a release.
- The Draft Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) (Second) Amendment Rules, 2025, proposes to add in rule 6, in sub-rule (10) of the existing rules that: "Provided that every e-commerce entity selling imported products shall provide a searchable and sortable filter for the country of origin, with their product listings."
- The release added that the amendment seeks to empower consumers to make informed purchasing decisions by allowing them to easily identify the origin of products while shopping online. "The proposed feature will enable consumers to search and sort products by their country of origin, thereby enhancing transparency and reducing the time required to locate such information across vast product listings," it said.
- Stakeholders can submit their observations and comment on the draft rules to the government till November 22, 2025. "The amendment directly supports the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Vocal for Local' initiatives by making 'Made in India' products easily discoverable," the Centre added.

## ❖ ISMA welcomes sugar export permit announcement

**Context: The government's decision to permit 15 lakh tonnes of sugar for export during the current sugar season will enable the sugar mills to plan their production in advance and channel surplus sugar into global markets, said the Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA).**

As a long-term measure, the ISMA strongly urged for revision of the minimum selling price (MSP) of sugar, which has remained unchanged for over six years.

## ❖ TRAI proposes mandating clearer telco-to-telco calls

**Context: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) proposed an overhaul of the interconnect regulations that govern how different networks connect with and compensate each other for call and data traffic.**

### Specific Mandate

- In a consultation paper on “Review of existing TRAI Regulations on Interconnection matters,” the regulator specifically floats the idea of mandating digital (“all-IP”) interconnection between telcos to boost call quality and reliability of service.
- The main wireless telecom operators — Bharti Airtel Ltd., Vodafone Idea Ltd. and Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. — have shifted to at least 4G, if not 5G, technologies, which should enable them to provide high speed internet and high quality calls over technologies like VoLTE (voice over LTE) and VoNR (voice over 5G networks).
- However, telcos largely seem to be using analogue interconnection technologies for calls between their subscribers and people on other networks, leading to a noticeable dip in quality in phone calls outside a telecom firm's network.

## ❖ Rural unemployment down, urban joblessness up, finds government survey

**Context: The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by the Labour Bureau for the July-September 2025 quarter show unemployment rate among persons aged 15 years and above in rural areas declined to 4.4% during the period from 4.8% in the previous quarter.**

- The PLFS also showed urban unemployment rate had “edged up slightly”, with rates increasing from 6.1% to 6.2% for males, and from 8.9% to 9.0% for females, during the same period.
- Overall, the unemployment rate among persons aged 15 years and above dropped to 5.2% in July-September, 2025 from 5.4% in the previous quarter, according to the survey.
- Self-employment dominated in rural areas while in urban areas, jobs were based on regular wages or salaried employment. Self-employed persons of age 15 years and above in rural areas increased to 62.8% during July- September, up from 60.7% recorded in the previous quarter of April-June 2025.

**Table1:** Comparison of public sector employment and expenditure

Country	Public sector wage bill (% of GDP)	Public sector wage bill (% of total expenditure)	Public sector employment (% of total employment)
India	5.48	17.70	8.5
U.S.	9.50	20.58	12.9
U.K.	10.20	20.29	29.0
France	13.37	21.43	31.5
Germany	8.51	16.46	22.4
Brazil	10.65	24.92	12.5

Source: World Bank – World Bureaucracy Indicators - 2022

- “In urban areas, the share of regular wage/ salaried employment also showed marginal improvement, rising to 49.8% in July-September from 49.4% in April-June, 2025,” the survey found. “On average, 56.2 crore persons (aged 15 years and above) were employed in the country during the quarter of July-September 2025, of which 39.6 crore were male and 16.6 crore were female,” the PLFS stated.
- The rural workforce continued to concentrate in the agriculture sector, and the urban workforce were primarily employed by the tertiary sector. The majority of the rural workers were engaged in the agriculture sector, accounting for 57.7% during the period, up from 53.5% in the previous quarter. “This increase in the share of rural employment in the agriculture sector can be attributed to seasonal agricultural operations. In the urban areas, the tertiary sector remained dominant, engaging 62% of workers during July-September, 2025, slightly higher than 61.7% in April-June, 2025,” the Bureau noted.
- The overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) among females of age 15 years and above increased to 33.7% in July-September 2025 from 33.4% in the previous quarter. “This improvement was driven largely by the increase in female LFPR in rural areas from 37% in the quarter April-June 2025 to 37.5% in July-September 2025.

#### ❖ NPCI arm, BENEFIT sign pact for faster remittances

- NPCI International Payments Ltd. (NIPL) has entered into a tie-up with BENEFIT, Bahrain’s fintech and electronic financial transactions company, to enable real-time cross-border remittances between India and Bahrain.

#### ❖ What is the role of a pay commission?

- The Central government has constituted the 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC) with retired Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai as the Chairperson. It also consists of Professor Pulak Ghosh, faculty at IIM Bangalore, as a part-time member and Pankaj Jain IAS, Secretary to the government of India, as member-secretary. It will submit its report within 18 months.

#### What is a pay commission?

- Pay commissions are set up in India by an executive order based on a Cabinet decision.
- The role of the CPC is to go into various issues of salary structures, retirement benefits and other service conditions of Central government employees, including defence personnel, and make suitable recommendations on the changes required. The first CPC was set up in 1946.

#### What are its terms of reference?

- The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the pay commissions are finalised by the Union Cabinet. The TOR of the 8th CPC requires it to consider certain factors while making its recommendations.
- They include economic conditions of the country and the need for fiscal prudence; need to ensure adequate resources for developmental expenditure and welfare measures; unfunded cost of non-contributory pension schemes; impact of recommendations on State government finances that usually adopt the recommendations of the CPC; and the prevailing emolument structure and working conditions available for central public sector undertakings and private sector employees.

### **What are the international practices?**

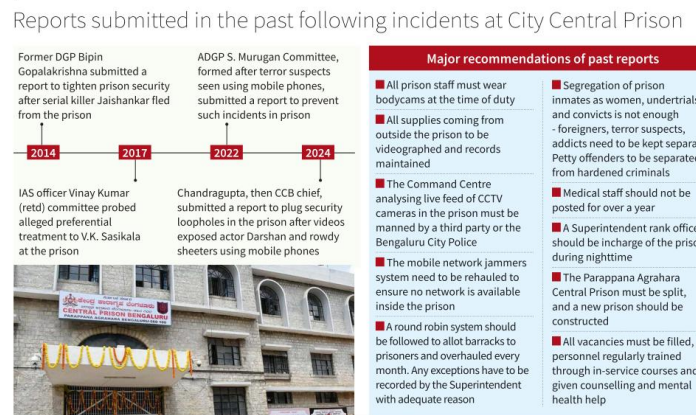
- Globally, till the 1970s, the compensation system for the public sector was aimed at achieving equity by benchmarking them with similar roles in the private employment market.
- In the 1980s, efficiency replaced equity as the key principle in determining compensation.
- Starting with the 1990s, performance and incentives became the key principle while balancing them with affordability. At present, public sector compensation systems are evolving to recruit and retain individuals with appropriate competencies and skills, while attempting to contain the total cost to the public exchequer.
- As per global standards the key characteristics of fair compensation in the public sector are clear philosophy, ability to attract talent, internal equity, external competitiveness and clarity. In India while internal equity is given adequate weightage, external competitiveness lags behind when it comes to compensation for top positions.
- It is interesting to note some comparative data for large democracies on certain parameters of public sector employment summarised in Table 1. It can be observed that while the general perception in our country is that public sector employment and wages are gargantuan with limited efficiency, it is lesser in almost all parameters when compared to other major democracies.

### **What next?**

- There are certain key aspects of the TOR that require attention. First, the TOR requires the CPC to compare the pay structure of the public sector with the private sector. This has been addressed even in earlier pay commissions.
- Entry level posts in the public sector have significantly higher salaries than their private counterparts while it is the opposite for higher posts and specialist roles. The compression ratio, that is, the ratio of lowest to highest salaries in the Central government has been fixed at 1:12.5 in the seventh CPC.
- Privileges and perks coupled with job security is a significant intangible that makes up for lower salary packages in top government posts. However, this needs to be revisited with respect to certain top posts and specialist roles in order to attract and retain talent. Second, intangibles like learning and development, training, and work environment including flexible working and health promotion are not part of the TOR. It may be expected that the Commission will address these issues in its final report.
- Finally, the 8th CPC has been mandated to consider economic conditions, need to ensure adequate resources for welfare, and unfunded cost of non-contributory pension schemes. The pension bill for the year 2025-26 is estimated at ₹2.76 lakh crore out of the total revenue expenditure of ₹39.44 lakh crore of the central government.
- The impact of non-contributory pension schemes on the government exchequer needs to be borne in mind while making recommendations. However, welfare measures are political decisions that keep evolving. New schemes are announced by the Centre from time to time.
- Considering these factors, a commission with members from the judiciary, academia and bureaucracy may not be equipped to assess the impact. There may also be a case for broad basing the commission with finance and human resource professionals to bring in diverse opinions.

**Context: Most of the recommendations of previous four committees have not been implemented; Hitendra Committee, the latest, was formed.**

- In just over a decade, the Karnataka government has formed five committees to recommend measures to tighten security at the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison- four under the Congress regime and one under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) regime.
- The latest was formed, led by R. Hitendra, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order). Just like the previous four times, this committee was also formed in response to a recent expose of inmates at the prison having access to television, mobile phones, and alcohol, even as most of the recommendations made by the previous four committees are gathering dust.
- “The State government has been indulging in a knee-jerk reaction every time there is an expose of inmates accessing some banned items. Most of these committees have only bought time and created an impression that action was being taken, without addressing basic issues in the prison like overcrowding, large vacancies, removing subjectivity from processes in the prison, which most of these reports have flagged,” said a senior official, who did not wish to be named.



### 'Fence eating the crop'

- “The problem at the prison is mostly a case of collusion of officers, fence eating the crop. Suspensions of lower rank officers won't help. In bad cases, officers need to be sternly dealt with, including dismissals from service, to instill discipline in the rest. We need to send prison staff for regular in-service training, which is a rarity now,” a senior officer said.
- However, he said that the persistent problems of overcrowding at the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison and large-scale vacancies, nearly 40%, which are the fundamental issues, remain unaddressed. Splitting the jail and building a new jail was an absolute necessity, another officer said.
- One of the major recommendations of all the four committees has been to work towards removing subjectivity from various processes in the prison.
- For instance, two reports have recommended that the number of CCTV cameras in the prison should not only be increased, but the command centre analysing this live feed must be manned by a third party agency and not the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services. In fact, one report has suggested that the feed from the prison's command centre be linked to the Bengaluru City Police's Command Centre for a live review. Home Minister G. Parameshwara on Monday ordered such a Command Centre to be set up in the prison in the next two weeks, but there was no clarity on who would monitor the live feed and raise alarms over violations.

### Use of bodycams

- One of the committee reports has recommended that all prison personnel - from a sentry to the jail superintendent - must mandatorily be made to wear bodycams, but it has not been implemented yet.
- The reports have recommended that any supply of food or other material coming from outside should be thoroughly checked, videographed, and then only sent in. This was also not being followed thoroughly, sources said.
- This was often the channel for contraband to enter the prison, the sources said. At least two committee reports have recommended that separation of inmates is a must.

### Allocation of barracks

- Moreover, subjectivity needs to be removed in even allotment of barracks. A round robin system should be followed to allot barracks and every month the system needs to be overhauled again, one of the reports recommends.
- One of the reports said that medical officers should not be posted at the prison for over a year.
- Most of the illegal activities happen during night time, and no senior prison staff are usually present. A recent report has recommended that a superintendent rank officer should be on duty in the prison during night time so that there is accountability.

### ❖ **CM inaugurates Kalaloka store at KIA**

**Context: The Kalaloka store, which will showcase and sell Karnataka's traditional and GI-certified products to both domestic and international travellers at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), was inaugurated by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.**

- The Kalaloka store, which has been aesthetically designed to reflect the State's culture and heritage, has been set up by the Department of Industries at the Terminal 2.
- "This is a moment of joy in the industrial map of Karnataka. The KIA ranks third in the country in terms of passenger traffic.
- The Kalaloka store has been established to give visitors an immediate glimpse of Karnataka's pride and cultural essence as soon as they arrive. Through this initiative, our State's distinguished products will receive global recognition, branding, and market reach," the Chief Minister said.

- Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil said that the Kalaloka store, located near Terminal 2, features Karnataka's traditional products such as **Mysore Sandal Soap, sandalwood oil, incense sticks, Mysuru Silk, Channapatna toys, LIDKAR leather goods, aromatic coffee powders and beverages, handloom products, Ilkal sarees, Lambani garments, sandalwood artefacts, Bidriware, and Mysore-style paintings.**

- "In total, **45 GI-certified products from Karnataka** will be showcased and sold here," he said.

## ❖ ISRO conducts crucial safety tests on main parachutes for Gaganyaan crew

**Context: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently conducted an important test on main parachutes for the Gaganyaan Crew Module.**

- The test was conducted at the Babina Field Firing Range (BFFR) in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi on November 3 as part of the ongoing series of Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Tests (IMAT) for the qualification of parachute system for Gaganyaan mission.
- For the Gaganyaan Crew Module, the parachute system comprises a total of 10 parachutes of four types. The descent sequence begins with two apex cover separation parachutes that remove the protective cover of the parachute compartment, followed by two drogue parachutes that stabilise and decelerate the module.
- "Upon release of the drogues, three pilot parachutes are deployed to extract three main parachutes, which further slowdown the Crew Module to ensure a safe touchdown. The system is designed with redundancy — two of the three main parachutes are sufficient to achieve a safe landing," the space agency said.
- The main parachutes of the Gaganyaan mission deploy through a step-by-step process known as reefed inflation. "In this process, the parachute first opens partially, which is called reefing, and then fully opens after a predetermined period of time, known as disreefing.
- This process is carried out using a pyro device," it added. In the recent test, ISRO demonstrated one of the extreme scenarios — delay in the disreefing between the two main parachutes successfully, thereby validating the system for its maximum design conditions.
- The test evaluated the system's structural integrity and load distribution under asymmetric disreefing conditions, which is one of the most critical load scenarios expected during actual mission descent.
- A simulated mass equivalent to the Crew Module was dropped from an altitude of 2.5 km using the Indian Air Force's IL-76 aircraft. The parachute system deployed as planned and the sequence was executed flawlessly, and the test article achieved a stable descent and soft landing, validating the robustness of the parachute design.

## ❖ State ranks fourth in country in terms of adoption numbers

**Context: Maharashtra tops the list; despite growing interest, Karnataka faces a shortage of adoptable children.**

- Karnataka ranks fourth in the country in terms of adoption numbers, following Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, according to data shared by officials from the Directorate of Child Protection.
- While 306 children were adopted in 2024–25, and 190 so far in 2025–26, officials said the State faces a shortage of legally adoptable children despite a steady rise in the number of prospective parents.
- Data showed that Maharashtra recorded the highest number of adoptions in 2024–25 at around 800, followed by Tamil Nadu (600), West Bengal (315), and Karnataka (306). From 2020–21 up to October 2025–26, Karnataka has facilitated 1,540 adoptions, including 1,385 in-country and 155 inter-country, through 45 specialised adoption agencies — 21 government-run and 24 privately managed.

## **Year-wise**

- Karnataka recorded 256 adoptions in 2020–21, including 223 in-country and 33 inter-country adoptions. The number rose to 281 in 2021–22, with 239 domestic and 42 inter-country adoptions.
- In 2022–23, the State saw a dip with 223 adoptions — 188 in-country and 35 inter-country — but the trend picked up in 2023–24, when 284 children were adopted, including 263 within India and 21 abroad.
- The highest number of adoptions in recent years was recorded in 2024–25, with 306 children finding families — 293 in-country and 13 inter-country. In the ongoing financial year 2025–26, up to October, 190 children have been adopted so far, including 179 in-country and 11 inter-country adoptions.
- Arundathi T.S., Deputy Director (State Adoption Resource Agency - SARA), Directorate of Child Protection, that 2,271 registered prospective adoptive parents are waiting for adoption as of November 11, 2025. “However, only 79 children are currently available for adoption. Of these, 55 are children with special needs and 29 are normal,” she said.
- “Many children who are otherwise eligible (orphans, abandoned or surrendered) cannot be placed for adoption because their legal guardians are unwilling to give consent. When we approach them for consent, they refuse stating that they will take them away once they turn 18,” she said.
- The official attributed the low availability of adoptable children to successful efforts to trace families. “When infants below two are abandoned, efforts are made to trace parents within two months, while for older children the tracing period extends to four months,” she said.
- Children surrendered by parents are given a 60-day window for reclamation, after which the adoption process can proceed. A majority of these cases involve unwed mothers and teenage pregnancies, including those registered under the POCSO Act, she pointed out.
- The adoption process has become more transparent and accountable after being brought online under Mission Vatsalya. Aadhaar enrolment is being done for children entering the adoption system to ensure identification and safety, the official said.

## **Bengaluru Urban**

- In Bengaluru Urban district, which has six recognised adoption agencies, 283 children have been adopted in the last five years — 265 within India and 18 inter-country. This year alone, 36 children have been legally adopted.
- The District Child Protection Unit (East Division), established in June 2022, oversees two agencies — Shishu Mandir and St. Michael Home. Since its inception, 142 children have been adopted under its jurisdiction, including seven inter-country adoptions. Two inter-country adoptions from St. Michael Home are currently under process, officials said.

**Context: Country says the parties 'must remain committed to and guided by equity'; it urges the Brazil COP Presidency to make a special call to the Parties to submit their National Adaptation Plan.**

- India made its opening statement at COP30 in Belem, Brazil, underlining that the climate conference ought to be stressing “adaptation”, and the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement, signed in 2015, should not be used to “change the architecture” of that consensus.
- This “architecture” refers to the agreed-upon principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR)”, which means that all countries must do their bit to curb fossil fuel emissions but without compromising on national economic-development priorities.



**Common cause:** Attendees walking in front of the main entrance to the COP30 UN Climate Change Conference in Belem, Brazil. AFP

### **Dwindling finance**

- With the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement and developed countries agreeing to mobilise only \$300 billion — and not the demanded \$1.35 trillion annually — by 2035 as “climate finance” (to cope with unfolding climate disasters as well as move away from fossil fuels), developing countries, including India, saw this as a renegeing on agreed commitments.
- “We must remain committed to and guided by equity and common but differentiated responsibilities. The cornerstone principles of the Convention and its Paris Agreement signed all of us to the CBDR in Brazil back in 1992. We must reaffirm our strongest commitment to the principles here, not attempt to sideline and ignore them,” India delegation member Suman Chandra said as part of a collective of Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC).
- “Over the next two weeks, we must stay true to the cause and advance adaptation, which is among the most important issues for us. The [Brazil COP] Presidency must make a special call to the Parties to submit their National Adaptation Plan in line with national priorities and progress,” she added.
- The LMDC is a large collective that represents nearly half of the world’s population, and consists of China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Cuba, Egypt and several others.
- India is yet to submit its National Adaptation Plan and the updated Nationally Determined Contribution, which specifies steps to curb fossil fuel emission by 2035, to the United Nations.
- “We are not here to point fingers, but the facts speak for themselves. We cannot simply bypass the roadblocks and the impediments to implementation,” Ms. Chandra added.
- “Developed countries need to reach net zero much earlier than projected. They should invest significantly more in negative emission technologies,” Tanmay Kumar, Secretary, Environment Ministry and part of the India delegation, said on behalf of a joint statement by another grouping called BASIC (Brazil India China South Africa).

- The LMDC had pushed for including a discussion on the responsibility of developed countries on the COP30 agenda but in the larger spirit of “consensus” was moved to a separate negotiating track by COP30 President André Corrêa do Lago.

### ❖ SC judge: imported ideas may not save endangered species

**Context: Supreme Court judge Justice P.S. Narasimha said many environmental law principles imported from the West such as “inter-generational equity” are anthropocentric and would hardly be of any assistance in protecting an endangered species from extinction.**

- Justice Narasimha made these oral observations while hearing a petition filed by M.K. Ranjitsinh on the conservation of the dying species of the Great Indian Bustard, which is being bred in captivity, and the Lesser Florican.
- Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for the petitioner, said there were 70 bustards in captivity and 150 in the wild. Lesser Floricans number 70.
- “That is all... Captive breeding may be successful with the Great Indian Bustard, but it is not showing success with the Lesser Florican. Extinction is not an option for these two species,” he said.



The Great Indian Bustard

### ‘Biblical roots’

- Justice Narasimha said principles such as inter-generational equity had “Biblical” roots, with humans at the top.
- The judge referred to how, 13 years ago, a amicus curiae in the red sanders conservation case, had urged the Supreme Court to consider the “intrinsic worth” of an endangered species rather than its “instrumental value to human beings”.
- He criticised principles such as inter-generational equity which “pre-supposes the higher needs of human beings and lays down that exploitation of natural resources must be equitably distributed between the present and future generation”. The judge said the court, in its judgment in the red sanders case, had accepted his submissions on the need to take an ecocentric approach, which “obliges every citizen to have compassion for all living creatures”, in biodiversity law.

### ❖ Net direct tax collections grow 7% as refunds fall sharply

**Context: Net direct tax collections grew by 7% in this financial year up to November 10, largely driven by a significant contraction in the refunds paid out by the Income Tax Department during this period, official data shows.**

- The direct tax collections data, released by the Income Tax Department on Tuesday, shows that gross collections grew 2.15% to ₹15.35 lakh crore in this financial year up to November 11.
- Within this, gross corporate tax collections grew 4.6% to ₹ 6.9 lakh crore. Gross non-corporate tax — which includes personal income tax — grew 0.5% during this period to ₹ 8.1 lakh crore.

- “The data shows that, remarkably, non-corporate tax collections have kept pace in spite of the very significant rate cut last year,” Rohinton Sidhwa, Partner at Deloitte India said.
- “This is a very good sign showing stronger growth of income levels.” Total refunds were 17.7% lower this year than in the corresponding period of last year.
- According to Mr. Sidhwa, the fact that refunds have fallen significantly could either mean that cash paying tax payers are no longer in the tax net or that the government has “consciously throttled back” on refunds.
- As a result of the drop in refunds, net collections grew 7% to ₹12.9 lakh crore in this financial year up to November 11.



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## ❖ Infosys Prize: Kannada scholar among winners

**Context: A scholar of Prakrit and Kannada poetics and a Bengaluru-based scientist are among six winners of the Infosys Prize 2025. A scholar of Prakrit and Kannada poetics and a Bengaluru-based scientist are among six winners of the Infosys Prize 2025.**

- The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) announced the winners of the Infosys Prize 2025 in six categories-Economics, Engineering and Computer Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, and Physical Sciences.
- The **prize honours the accomplishments of individuals whose research and scholarship significantly impact India.**
- The **prize for each category comprises a gold medal, a citation, and a prize purse of \$100,000 (or its equivalent in rupees).**

The prize honours the accomplishments of individuals whose research and scholarship significantly impact the country



(From left): Nikhil Agarwal (Economics), Sushant Sachdeva (Engineering and Computer Science), Andrew Ollett (Humanities and Social Sciences), Anjana Badrinarayanan (Life Sciences), Sabyasachi Mukherjee (Mathematical Sciences), and Karthish Manthiram (Physical Sciences). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**The winners of the Infosys Prize 2025 in the six categories are:**

### **Economics**

✚ **Nikhil Agarwal:** Paul A. Samuelson Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he has won the prize for his **pioneering contribution to market design**, including the development and implementation of path-breaking methodology for empirical studies of allocation mechanisms, including school choice, medical residency, and kidney exchanges.

### **Humanities and Social Sciences**

✚ **Andrew Ollett:** Associate Professor in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, he is regarded the world's foremost scholar of the **Prakrit languages** in this generation. His book, **Language of the Snakes, is a magisterial analysis of the cultural roles of Prakrit in tandem with Sanskrit and the Indian vernaculars over the last 2,000 years.** His linguistic mastery and knowledge ranges from detailed contributions to the study of Sanskrit, Prakrit, Kannada, Tamil, Old Javanese, and Chinese, in addition to his knowledge of the modern European languages, and his training in Greek and Latin.

### **Engineering and Computer Science**

✚ **Sushant Sachdeva:** Associate Professor (CSC) of Mathematical and Computational Sciences at the University of Toronto, he has been awarded for his deep insights into **mathematical optimisation and the resolution of longstanding open questions in algorithmic theory** that has established new standards on achievable performance in computational problems affecting information flows across societal lifelines, including the internet, transportation, and communication networks.

## Life Sciences

✦ **Anjana Badrinarayanan:** Associate Professor at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru, the award is in recognition of her pioneering contributions to understanding **mechanisms of genome maintenance and repair**. Through innovative live-cell imaging combined with genetic and cell biological approaches, her work has revealed fundamental principles of how DNA damage is repaired, demonstrated mutagenesis in non-dividing cells, and identified novel pathways of mitochondrial DNA damage responses, illuminating principles central to life and evolution.

## Mathematical Sciences

✦ **Sabyasachi Mukherjee:** Associate Professor at the School of Mathematics at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, he has won the prize for his powerful and original work that **links two distinct areas of mathematics- the dynamics of Kleinian group actions and the iteration of holomorphic and anti-holomorphic maps** in complex dynamics. His results have reshaped our understanding of conformal dynamics, an area of study that has important implications across physics, fluid dynamics, and even data science.

## Physical Sciences

✦ **Karthish Manthiram:** Professor of Chemical Engineering at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), he is awarded for his pioneering work on sustainable electrochemical routes to essential chemicals. His breakthroughs in **lithium-mediated ammonia synthesis and oxygen-atom transfer catalysis** have transformed our understanding of electrified chemical manufacturing, demonstrating how renewable electricity can drive selective, efficient synthesis of chemicals that are fundamental to agriculture and industry.

## ❖ State govt. notifies menstrual leave policy

**Context: In what brings cheer and relief to the female workforce across Karnataka, the State government notified the menstrual leave policy, allowing one day leave a month, paving the way for its implementation.**

- **Women between 18 and 52 are eligible to seek menstrual leave, and it will be applicable for permanent, contract or outsourced workforce.**
- The policy will be applicable to the workforce employed in establishments **registered under the Factories Act, 1948; the Karnataka Shops and Establishments Act, 1961; the Plantation Workers Act 1951; the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, and the Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961.**
- The Government Order (GO) **does not specify anything on leaves for government employees or anganwadi workers or Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs).**
- An expert committee that deliberated on the policy earlier had recommended six days annually, which the government increased to 12 when it was approved in the Cabinet. In their feedback, four employers have suggested 12 leaves annually.
- The GO issued by the Labour Department said that the menstrual leave is being extended considering health aspects, and to increase efficiency, besides increasing female participation in the workforce. As per the conditions imposed in the GO, there will be no provision to carry over the leave to the next month and women are not mandated to provide any medical certificate.

- Feedback was received from individuals, organisations and trade unions, among others, of which 56 backed the policy. Twenty-six of those who supported the policy were from the management, the GO said.
- Welcoming the GO, Divya Biradar, convener, Karnataka Domestic Workers' Union, affiliated to AITUC, said: "However, the government should take immediate measures to formalise the policy. A legislation is stronger than a government order."
- She also said that the policy has to be amended to include a vast section of the female workforce engaged in domestic, agricultural, and construction work, apart from scheme workers such as anganwadis and ASHAs.
- The fixing of the age limit has also been objected to. A senior executive in a reputed organisation said: "Women would not have menopause before 52 in all cases. The policy should accommodate the interest of those people too."

### ❖ Retail inflation hits record low of 0.25%

**Context: Retail inflation fell to a historic low of 0.25% in October, with the government attributing this fall to the first full month's impact of GST rate cuts, a favourable base effect, and drop in inflation of several food items such as vegetables and fruits.**

- According to the government, this is the lowest rate of inflation measured in the current series of the Consumer Price Index.
- That is, it is the **lowest rate of inflation since January 2012**. The data reveal that the fall in overall inflation is largely due to the statistical impact of the base effect on food inflation.
- Most of the other categories in the CPI saw inflation higher in October 2025 than in the same month last year.
- The data show that the **food and beverages category saw prices contract 3.7%** in October 2025, following up on a contraction of 1.4% in September.
- In fact, food and beverage prices have contracted in four out of the seven months of this financial year so far.
- "The **decline in headline inflation and food inflation during the month of October 2025 is mainly attributed to the full month's impact of decline in Goods and Service Tax [rates], favourable base effect and to drop in inflation of oils and fats, vegetables, fruits, egg, footwear, cereals and products, transport and communication**, etc.," the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said in its release.
- According to economists, this decline is however due to a statistical base effect rather than an actual fall in prices. That is, because food inflation in the same month of last year was 9.7%, the change in prices this October looks relatively better.
- "Food inflation has come down mainly due to base effects," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at the Bank of Baroda, said.

#### Record low

The chart shows retail price inflation (in %), measured by the Consumer Price Index, from January 2012 to October 2025



- The data show that this base effect in food inflation was the driving factor behind the fall in overall inflation. For example, inflation in the fuel and light category stood at 2% in October 2025, compared to a contraction of 1.7% in October of the previous year.
- **Inflation in the housing category**, too, accelerated to 3% in October 2025 from 2.8% in October 2024.
- **The clothing and footwear category** was one of the few other than food that saw inflation easing in October, to 1.7% from 2.7% in October last year, likely on account of the GST rate cuts.

### **Inflation on tobacco products**

- The pan, tobacco, and other intoxicants category saw **inflation quicken** to 2.9% in October 2025 from 2.5% in the same month last year.
- The **miscellaneous category**, which captures all other items not included in the major sub-groups, saw **inflation accelerate** to 5.7% in October 2025 versus 4.3% in October last year.

### **❖ All HCs should upload details of time taken by judges to deliver verdicts: SC**

**Context: The Supreme Court said all High Courts should put out in the public domain the time taken by their judges to pronounce verdicts in pending cases.**

- A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi was hearing a plea by four life convicts from the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- They had complained that the Jharkhand High Court had not pronounced its verdicts on their criminal appeals even after reserving the cases for judgment two to three years ago.
- There are no specific timelines within which judges have to deliver verdicts. The convention is that they ought to pronounce judgments within a reasonable time, from two to six months, of reserving cases. However, judges, including in the Supreme Court and the High Courts, have in practice reserved judgments for well over a year before delivering them. This may be due to the complexity of the question of law involved or the burden of work.
- Justice Kant, who is Chief Justice of India-designate, indicated that reforms and transparency in judicial functioning must not be limited to litigants alone, it should also meet the legitimate expectations of the public at large.
- “Let everybody know how many judgments have been reserved by any judge and how many are pronounced; within how many days the judgments are made available in the public domain; and how many days High Courts take to upload judgments,” he observed.
- Justice Bagchi said there ought to be a **dashboard on High Court websites**, exclusively focusing on the reservation and pronouncement of judgments. “That will show the **transparency and accountability of the judiciary to the people**,” Justice Bagchi remarked.

- The top court, in its order, directed the State High Courts to file reports on their existing mechanisms to bring into the public domain the dates when pending judgments were reserved, the time taken between the reservation of judgments and their pronouncement, and when a pronounced judgment is actually uploaded on their official websites.
- The Bench specifically sought from the High Courts details of judgments reserved after January 31, 2025, and details of pronouncement of judgments till October 31, 2025. This would include the uploading of the judgments on the websites.
- The High Courts have been asked for their views about framing a uniform mechanism to disclose the dates of reservation, pronouncement of judgments and their uploading on websites.
- The Bench said the High Courts could be frank about their apprehensions about laying bare such details in the public domain. The court underscored that the High Courts must be frank about the adverse consequences that may result from such disclosures.
- In an earlier hearing of the case in September, the top court had emphasised the urgent need to evaluate the performance of High Court judges. “Our intention is not to act as a school principal and monitor everything, but there should be broad guidelines. Judges should know the task before them,” the top court had observed then.

### ❖ Eastern Himalayan birds under threat: IISc Study

**Context: A new study from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has revealed that insectivorous birds found in the understorey of the Eastern Himalayas are under threat due to habitat degradation.**

- Researchers at the Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES) studied how changes in forest microclimates after selective logging influence the survival of wild bird populations in the **Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh**, over a period of 10 years between 2011 and 2021.

#### **Birds tagged**

- The team tagged birds with lightweight aluminium rings and revisited the same sites annually to track their survival and changes in body mass. The IISc said that the team paired this dataset with temperature-humidity loggers placed in both primary and logged forests, to estimate how understorey insectivorous birds which live below the canopy adapt to microclimatic changes.
- “Using these long-term data sets, we can better understand why some species survive after logging while others decline strongly,” said Akshay Bharadwaj, a former Master of Science student at CES and corresponding author of the study.
- Overall, the team found that logged forests are consistently hotter and drier during the day and colder at night in comparison to primary forests, exposing birds to stressful fluctuations due to loss of the forest canopy.

#### **Climate change impact**

- These conditions, the scientists say, could intensify with climate change, especially in the Eastern Himalayas where bird species are thermal specialists.

- Their findings reveal that these birds, which utilise very different primary and logged forest microclimatic niches, are most adversely affected in a logged forest and they experience a decline in body mass, and steep declines in long-term survival.
- “Species that can still find microclimates in logged forests similar to their original forest homes are surviving after selective logging. It is those which can’t match their old conditions that face steep declines,” said Mr. Bharadwaj. Based on their findings, the researchers suggest that conservation strategies should prioritise preserving primary forest across elevational gradients.
- The study highlights the significance of understanding why certain species of birds are declining after logging, and how microclimatic niches in disturbed habitats influence population dynamics.

### ❖ Union Cabinet clears new royalty rates of critical minerals

**Context: Seeking to reduce import dependence and vulnerabilities in the supply chain of critical minerals, the Union Cabinet approved the rationalisation of royalty rates of graphite, caesium, rubidium, and zirconium.**

- With the rationalisation structure, graphite, wherein royalty was previously sought on per tonne-basis (that is, a fixed amount for a specific weight of ore), will now be charged on an ad valorem basis.
- Graphite with less than 80% fixed carbon content will be subject to 4% royalty of the average sale price, whilst that with 80% or more carbon content would attract 2%.
- Caesium and rubidium would be subject to a royalty rate of 2% on the average sale price based on the specific metal contained in the ore produced. A royalty rate of 1% would apply to zirconium.

#### **Promoting auction**

- In a statement, the Cabinet said that the decision to rationalise would promote the auction of mineral blocks of caesium, rubidium, and zirconium.
- “Today’s approval of the Union Cabinet on the rate of royalty will help the bidders to rationally submit their financial bids in the auction,” the Cabinet statement emphasised.

### ❖ Bombay HC criticises govt. over malnutrition deaths in Maharashtra’s tribal regions

**Context: The Bombay High Court pulled up the Maharashtra and Union governments for an “extremely casual” approach over handling the malnutrition issue among infants in the State’s tribal regions.**

- The Bench comprising Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Sandesh Patil was hearing a series of petitions filed over the infant deaths due to malnourishment in Amravati district’s Melghat region, a tribal-dominant area, where chronic malnutrition has existed for years. The court called the situation “horrific”, saying “the government should be concerned”.

- During the hearing, the petitioner drew attention to the fact that from June 2025 to date, 65 infants in the age group of 0-6 months had died due to malnutrition in Melghat. The court noted that despite several orders since 2001, the problem persists like a plague due to a lack of implementation of those directives.
- However, the State government claimed these deaths happened due to pneumonia and not malnutrition. To this, the court asked, “Whether the 2001 court order to construct a multispecialty hospital in the area was actually implemented?” No answer was received.

### **‘Extremely casual’**

- Calling out the State government, the court said: “This shows your seriousness on the issue. The approach is extremely casual, and many things need answers from you.”
- On the documents presented by the State reflecting the efforts taken, the court stated: “Everything looks good on paper, but far from reality.”
- The court ordered Principal Secretaries of Public Health, Tribal Affairs, Women and Child Development, and Finance departments to submit affidavits on the measures taken in detail and appear in court on November 24.

### **❖ India, Botswana announce cheetah translocation pact**

**Context: India and Botswana formally announced the translocation of eight cheetahs from the African nation during the state visit of President Droupadi Murmu.**

- Thanking her counterpart, President Duma Gideon Boko, and the people of Botswana, President Murmu assured Mr. Boko that India would take good care of the animals. Botswana will symbolically hand over the big cats to Ms. Murmu.
- The two heads of state will preside over an event where five of the eight captured cheetahs will be released into a quarantine facility at the Mokolodi nature reserve, marking the symbolic handing over of the hunting cats to India by Botswana as part of Project Cheetah.



### **❖ India ninth worst affected by extreme weather: study**

**Context: A new report, Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2026, published by Germanwatch, released at COP30 in Belém evening, finds that more than 832,000 people died, nearly 5.7 billion were affected, and economic losses exceeded \$4.5 trillion (inflation-adjusted) from over 9,700 extreme weather events between 1995 and 2024.**

- Germanwatch is a Bonn-based environmental and development organisation that advocates for global equity and sustainability in climate policy.
- India ranks ninth among the countries most affected during this period, facing recurring floods, cyclones, droughts, and increasingly severe heatwaves.
- “Countries such as Haiti, the Philippines, and India – all of which are among the ten most affected – face particular challenges.

- They are hit by floods, heatwaves, or storms so regularly that entire regions can hardly recover from the impacts until the next event strikes,” said Vera Künzel, senior advisor on climate change adaptation and human rights at Germanwatch.

### ❖ SC to examine if farmers are evading satellite surveillance

**Context: Chief Justice of India asks if farmers get together and decide when to burn stubble; court issues notice to Punjab and Haryana governments to submit latest reports on stubble-burning incidents.**

- The Supreme Court decided to examine if farmers were burning crop stubble when satellites were not overhead to avoid surveillance. Stubble burning is considered a major source of air pollution choking the national capital.
- A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai appeared incredulous when the amicus curiae, senior advocate Aparajita Singh, told the judges that agriculturists waited for the surveillance satellite to pass overhead before putting the lighted match to the stalks. “They are delaying the burning in tune with the movement of the satellite,” Ms. Singh submitted.
- “Are you saying all the farmers get together and decide when to burn,” Chief Justice Gavai reacted.
- Ms. Singh submitted photographs and data collected from material posted online by a NASA scientist, who claimed to have analysed European and Korean satellites to conclude that stubble-burning had neither gone down or stopped. The amicus curiae, answering the Chief Justice’s question, said satellites passed overhead at a specific time.
- She referred to media reports of farmers on camera saying the State administrations had shared the timing of the satellites with the farmers.
- Ms. Singh raised doubts, under these circumstances, about the veracity of data and information fed to the top court.
- “The scientist has uploaded photographs showing the maze above Punjab. If this is true, it is alarming. Their count [of the number of incidents of stubble-burning] is not true,” the amicus curiae submitted.
- The court issued notice to the States of Punjab and Haryana to submit their latest reports on stubble-burning incidents.
- In September, the top court had suggested a return to criminal prosecution of errant agriculturists, and even a separate law. The Centre had, however, maintained that it was a policy to take farmers along rather than put them behind bars.
- At the time, the debate between the court and the government had broken out after Ms. Singh had pointed out that farmers continued to burn despite “humongous” efforts and funds spent by the Centre to wean them away from an annual practice, which dispels a cloud of toxicity across States in northern India.
- Ms. Singh had said the situation on the ground returns to square one at the beginning of every winter season regardless of the extensive orders from the Supreme Court to curb stubble-burning.

- The **amicus curiae and several lawyers**, including senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, urged the court to direct the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to upgrade anti-pollution restrictions in **Delhi-NCR from the current GRAP III stage to the stricter GRAP IV measures**, which involve a complete stop in construction and demolition activities. “Your Lordships have asked the CAQM to take steps in anticipation. The AQI has already breached 400. The CAQM must not wait for it to turn ‘severe plus’. It should anticipate and take action now,” Ms. Singh said.

#### ❖ **Jaishankar meets Rubio at CanadaG7 meeting**

**Context: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the sidelines of the G7 Foreign Ministers’ meeting in Canada where terror strike near the Red Fort featured.**

- “Discussed our bilateral ties, focusing on trade and supply chains. Exchanged views on the Ukraine conflict, the Middle East/West Asia situation and Indo-Pacific,” said Mr. Jaishankar on X after the talks, adding, “Appreciate his condolences on the loss of lives in the blast in Delhi.”
- Mr. Jaishankar also met Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand earlier in the day.
- The terror attack drew messages of condemnation and condolences from across the world, including from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, incoming U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates.

#### ❖ **MEA launches new version of Passport Seva Programme**

**Context: The Ministry of External Affairs has rolled out the “upgraded version” of its Passport Seva Programme (PSP), the MEA said in a statement.**

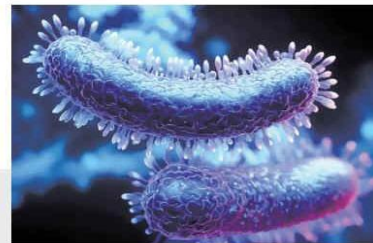
- The rollout included the Passport Seva Programme (PSP V2.0), the **Global Passport Seva Programme** and the **e-passport for citizens** in India and for the **Indian citizens living abroad**.
- The MEA described the introduction of **e-passports alongside PSP V2.0 a “significant milestone for the Ministry”**.
- “The new and improved passport website and mobile app give users a better experience through features like auto-filled forms, simpler document uploads, and easy online payments...,” the Ministry said.

#### ❖ **Tuberculosis incidence falling in India by 21% a year: WHO report**

**Context: India’s tuberculosis (TB) incidence, with new cases emerging every year, fell by 21% — from 237 TB cases per lakh population in 2015 to 187 per lakh population in 2024 — almost double the pace of decline observed globally, at 12%, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) Global TB Report, 2025, the Union Health Ministry said in a release issued.**

## India leads global TB fight

India records one of the world's steepest tuberculosis declines, doubling global progress through innovation and outreach



■ TB incidence fell 21% (2015-2024), from 237 to 187 cases per lakh.

■ Treatment coverage rose from 53% (2015) to 92% (2024)

■ 26.18 lakh diagnosed out of 27 lakh estimated cases

■ The number of missing cases reduced from 15 lakh (2015) to <1 lakh (2024)

■ The treatment success rate in India was about 90%, against the global average of 88%

■ TB mortality declined from 28 deaths per lakh to 21 deaths per lakh (2015-2024)

- This was one of the highest declines in TB incidence globally, outpacing reductions noted among other high-burden countries.
- “India’s innovative case finding approach, driven by the swift uptake of newer technologies, decentralisation of services, and large-scale community mobilisation, has led to the country’s treatment coverage to surge to over 92% in 2024, from 53% in 2015 — with 26.18 lakh TB patients being diagnosed in 2024, out of an estimated incidence of 27 lakh cases,” the release said.
- The Ministry said this had helped reduce the number of “missing cases” — those who had TB but were not reported to the programme — from an estimated 15 lakh in 2015 to less than one lakh in 2024.
- Also, there is no significant increase in the number of multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB patients in the country, adding that treatment success rate under the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan increases to 90%, ahead of the global treatment success rate of 88%.
- India’s TB mortality rate has also decreased from 28 per lakh population in 2015 to 21 per lakh population in 2024, reflecting significant progress in reducing deaths due to TB.
- Since its launch in December 2024, India’s flagship TB elimination mission, the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, has achieved extensive reach, screening over 19 crore vulnerable individuals for TB across the country, leading to the detection of over 24.5 lakh TB patients, including 8.61 lakh asymptomatic TB cases, the report said.

### ❖ GI tag fee cut to ₹1,000; Minister promises backing for tribal goods

**Context: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced here that the application fee for the Geographical Indications (GI) tag had been reduced to ₹1,000 from ₹5,000.**

- At the inaugural Tribal Business Conclave, he urged tribal artisans to register and protect traditional products and crafts. He further promised the support of his Ministry in creating export and e-commerce linkages for tribal enterprises and international warehouses for their products.
- The conclave, held by the Ministries of Tribal Affairs and Culture and the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, featured panel discussions and masterclasses on topics such as financing innovations for, and investments in, tribal enterprises, partnerships, industry linkages, and skilling.
- Mr. Goyal said schools, universities, industries, and the government must work together to ensure that products made by tribal artisans reach the larger domestic and global markets.
- The Minister promised the full support of his Ministry and the DPIIT in this mission, by creating export and e-commerce linkages and facilitating international warehouses for tribal goods.

- The conclave was part of the Government of India's **Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh celebrations, to mark the 150th birth anniversary year of tribal icon Birsa Munda.**

### **GI tags distributed**

- The event also saw GI tag certificates being distributed for crafts and products such as **Kannadippaya (bamboo mat) of Kerala, Apatani textile of Arunachal Pradesh, Marthandam honey of Tamil Nadu, Lepcha Tungbuk of Sikkim, Bodo Aronai of Assam, Ambaji white marble of Gujarat, and Bedu and Badri cow ghee of Uttarakhand.**
- The Tribal Affairs Ministry announced a Tribal Affairs Grand Challenge, inviting enterprises to design solutions for tribal communities.

### **❖ Puri, Canadian minister discuss hydrocarbons trade**

**Context: Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri met Canada's Minister for International Trade Maninder Sidhu to discuss bilateral hydrocarbon trade between the two nations. Mr. Puri wrote on social media that the bilateral hydrocarbons trade that scaled \$226.45 million in the fiscal year 2024-25 also had a "substantial upside potential".**

- The meeting was part of Mr. Sidhu's official visit to India wherein the North American country is seeking to "find opportunities to advance trade and investment linkages" between the two nations.
- Ottawa is seeking to diversify avenues for hydrocarbons exports, and is at the receiving end of the Trump tariff regime.

### **❖ Protesters clash with security at Brazil's COP30**

**Context: Dozens of Indigenous protesters forced their way into the COP30 climate summit venue and clashed with security guards at the entrance to demand climate action and forest protection.**

- Shouting angrily, protesters demanded access to the UN compound where thousands of delegates from countries around the world are attending this year's **UN climate summit in the Amazon city of Belem, Brazil.**
- Some waved flags with slogans calling for land rights or carried signs saying, "Our land is not for sale."
- Security guards pushed the protesters back and used tables to barricade the entrance. The protesters dispersed shortly after the clash.

## ❖ Mekedatu: 'T.N. challenge is premature'

**Context: The Supreme Court termed Tamil Nadu's application challenging the proposed construction of a reservoir by Karnataka at Mekedatu across the inter-state river Cauvery as "premature" and refused to entertain it.**

- The Supreme Court (November 13, 2025) termed Tamil Nadu's application challenging the proposed construction of a reservoir by Karnataka at Mekedatu across the inter-state river Cauvery as "premature" and refused to entertain it.
- A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai said, Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the reservoir, submitted by Karnataka, was only being considered by the experts in the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC).
- The Central Water Commission (CWC) has already made it clear that any acceptance of the DPR would be given only after approvals from CWMA and CWRC.
- In case of approval of DPR, affected parties, including Tamil Nadu, would be free to take measures in accordance with the law.
- The apex court said, Karnataka, anyway, would be bound to release Cauvery water allotted to lower riparian Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry, which is downstream. The hearing before the three-judge Bench was based on an application moved by Tamil Nadu in the apex court seeking a direction to restrain the CWMA from deliberating the proposed reservoir project.
- The application has stated that the planning of the **Mekedatu project with a capacity of 67.16 TMC ft. and generation of 400 MW project** worth Rs. 9000 crore was in "gross violation" of the decision of the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal of February 5, 2007**, which was affirmed by the Supreme Court itself on February 16, 2018.
- "The entire objective of the Tribunal's final decision is to ensure that the pattern of the release of water to the downstream State to meet irrigation interests is not jeopardised," Tamil Nadu, represented by senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, argued.
- Senior advocate Shyam Divan, for Karnataka, would in no way impact the water allotted to Tamil Nadu. He said Tamil Nadu's apprehensions were "completely misconceived".
- But Tamil Nadu explained that the proposed reservoir would result in the impounding of the flows generated in the Cauvery river from the uncontrolled catchment of the Kabini sub-basin downstream of the Kabini reservoir, the catchment of Cauvery river downstream of KRS dam, uncontrolled flows from Shimsha, Arkavathy and Suvarnavathy sub-basins and various other small streams, which are the sources to ensure 177.25TMC at Billigundlu.
- It said CWMA cannot deliberate or pass any directions on the project when the Supreme Court was seized of the state's applications to direct the Central Water Commission to reject and return the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the project and restrain the Environment Ministry from entertaining any application for clearance relating to the Mekedatu project.

## ❖ IT policy 2025-30: State to pump in ₹967 crore towards incentives

**Context: It seeks to bring investments with special focus on AI and other emerging technologies in cities beyond Bengaluru.**

- Karnataka will be spending ₹967 crore towards varied incentives under the Karnataka Information Technology Policy 2025-2030 that seeks to bring significant investments with special focus on AI and other emerging technologies in cities beyond Bengaluru, and elevate Karnataka's brand globally as **'AI-native destination'**.
- While 16 incentives, including nine newly added incentives, have been proposed to companies to be located in cities beyond Bengaluru, six major incentives have been proposed to units to be located in Bengaluru.

**Many types of support**

- Among the new incentives being introduced are support for faculty development, recruitment assistance, and talent relocation reimbursements.
- The new policy covers operational costs through electricity duty reimbursement, property tax reimbursement and telecom infrastructure development besides EPF reimbursement, rental assistance and skilling cost reimbursement for companies located beyond Bengaluru.
- The other incentives include internship cost reimbursement, intellectual property incentive, support faculty development programmes, reimbursement for quality certifications and power tariff concessions among others.

**Outlay**

- The financial outlay to implement the fiscal incentives and concessions for a period of five years is ₹754.62 crore, and ₹212.50 crore has been earmarked for government interventions such as fellowships and other programmes.
- The proposed policy expands the scope to provide extension of benefits to Indian-headquartered Global Capacity Centres operating or establishing a presence in Karnataka. It covers both new and expanding entities.

**Increasing GSVA**

- The goal is to **increase the IT sector's contribution to Gross State Value Added (GSVA) from 26% to 36% and increase software exports from ₹4.09 lakhs crore to ₹11.5 lakhs crore by 2030**, besides driving investments in emerging cities such as **Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Belagavi, Tumakuru, Kalaburgi, and Shivamogga**.
- To elevate the State's IT and innovation ecosystem, the government through public-private partnership seeks to establish **'Technoverse'**, integrated technology campuses within the upcoming Global Innovation Districts.
- It will offer future-ready tech eco system with advanced R&D labs, digital virtual testbeds, and sector-focused innovation zones among others.

**Digital networks**

- It seeks to make the State with future ready digital network - Global Testbed Infrastructure Network and Statewide Digital Hub Grid - launch fellowship for 1,000 mid-career women tech professionals, IT talent return programmes, set up ease of doing business cell, and start shared corporate transport - IT Corridor Bus Pooling.

## ❖ Karnataka space tech policy aims to garner 5% of global market share

**Context: In a bid to sustain Karnataka as the number one destination for space technology in India and hold 50% of the national market share, which is estimated to be around \$22 billion market by 2033, the State government approved the Karnataka Space Technology policy 2025-2030 to make Karnataka a global space technology destination, aiming at 5% of the global market share.**

### **500 start-ups**

- The main objective of the policy is to support and help skill development of 50,000 young professionals, attract \$3 billion through investment incentives and outreach and support 500 start-ups and MSMEs, with grants to enable design, manufacturing, assembly, integration, testing, launching, and operations of 50 satellites from Karnataka.
- Among the focus areas of the policy will be the government support to companies engaged in the development of next generation space capabilities, including space stations and space tourism infrastructure, in-orbit manufacturing, and servicing capabilities.
- The government is also looking to support space asset development, launch infrastructure, manufacturing infrastructure and software. It will also support enterprises involved in earth observation, satellite communications, positioning, navigation, and timing services.
- The policy aims to facilitate global and domestic space sector to invest to set up manufacturing and assembly, integration and testing units in Karnataka to cater to domestic and international market.
- While a special package will be designed based on the project proposal for incentives for investments above ₹100 crore, a list of exemption, subsidy, and incentives have been provided for investments that are less than ₹100 crores.
- Law and Parliamentary Affairs H.K. Patil announced the contours of the policy in the Cabinet briefing here on Thursday. It also aims to facilitate highly skilled workforce across the space value chain.
- He said that the policy looks at five broad strategies that include skill development, investments, infrastructure and facilities, innovation and facilitation, and adoption and awareness. A space technology cell, which will act as single touch point for industry, start-ups, and MSMEs will be set up under the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society.

## ❖ India, Nepal ink pact to step up trade ties

**Context: India and Nepal have amended the Treaty of Transit between the two countries to facilitate the movement of rail-based freight between Jogbani in India and Biratnagar in Nepal, including bulk cargo.**

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and Nepal's Minister for Industry, Commerce and Supplies Anil Kumar Sinha met in New Delhi on Thursday to exchange the letters amending the protocol to the **Treaty of Transit between India and Nepal.**

- “This liberalisation extends to key **transit corridors — Kolkata-Jogbani, Kolkata-Nautanwa (Sunauli), and Visakhapatnam-Nautanwa (Sunauli)**, thereby strengthening multimodal trade connectivity between the two countries and Nepal’s trade with third countries,” the government said in a release.
- The two Ministers also welcomed the ongoing bilateral initiatives to boost cross-border connectivity and trade.

### ❖ SC bats for protection of pristinesal forest in Jharkhand’s Saranda

**Context: The Supreme Court directed the Jharkhand government to declare 31,468.25 hectares (approximately 314 sq. km.) of the Saranda forest area as a wildlife sanctuary, balancing biodiversity protection with sustainable iron ore mining.**

- “The State cannot run away from its duty to declare the extent of 31,468.25 hectares as Saranda Wildlife Sanctuary,” a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai observed in the judgment.

#### **Part of the ecosystem**

- **Saranda is one of the world’s most pristine sal forests, the court noted. It is home to critically endangered species, including the endemic sal forest tortoise, four-horned antelope, Asian palm civet, and wild elephants.**
- For centuries, the area has been **inhabited by the Ho, Munda, Uraon and allied Adivasi communities** whose subsistence and cultural traditions are intrinsically tied to forest produce.
- **The Saranda forest division also accounts for 26% of India’s iron ore reserves.** The steel plants of SAIL and Tata are critically dependent on mining in this area.
- Amicus curiae, senior advocate K. Parameshwar, had submitted to the court that a judicial declaration of the entire area as a wildlife sanctuary would halt mining and affect employment opportunities.
- The hearings had seen the Jharkhand government dither about the area that ought to be cordoned off from mining and declared a wildlife sanctuary.
- The State had initially suggested that only 24,941.64 hectares of forest area should be declared a sanctuary, arguing that “vital public infrastructure” in the area would have to be demolished to make space for the sanctuary.
- However, the Jharkhand government later clarified in court that 31,468.25 hectares of forest area, consisting of 126 compartments, neither hosted mining activities nor was used for any non-forest use.
- The court, in its judgment, reminded Jharkhand that a “State has a positive obligation and a mandate to provide statutory protection to forests and wildlife and declare ecologically significant areas to be statutorily protected”.
- The Bench ordered the Jharkhand government to widely publicise that neither the individual nor community rights of tribals and forest dwellers in the Saranda area will be adversely affected by the judgment.

## ❖ Centre releases draft Seeds Bill; farm outfits cautious, industry welcomes it

**Context: After two failed attempts by both the UPA and NDA governments in 2004 and 2019 to pass a similar law, the Union government has brought yet another draft Seeds Bill here.**

- The Union Agriculture Ministry said the new draft is aligned with current agricultural and regulatory requirements. The proposed legislation is intended **to replace the existing Seeds Act, 1966 and the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983.**
- While the seed industry welcomed the move, farmer organisations reminded the Centre that it had to withdraw the Bill on two occasions following their resistance.
- The Centre said in a release that the **draft Seeds Bill, 2025 seeks to regulate the quality of seeds and planting materials available in the market, ensure farmers' access to high-quality seeds at affordable rates, protect farmers from losses, and liberalise seed imports to promote access to global varieties.**
- “On the enforcement side, the **draft Bill proposes to decriminalise minor offences, thereby promoting ‘Ease of Doing Business’ and reducing compliance burden, while maintaining strong provisions to penalise serious violations effectively,**” the government said.
- All stakeholders and members of the public can submit their comments and suggestions on the draft Bill and its provisions by December 11.
- As per the draft, every dealer in seeds shall obtain a registration certificate from the State government before selling, keeping for sale, offering to sell, import or export or otherwise supply any seed by himself or by another person on his behalf.
- The draft law also provides for regulation of sale of seeds so that seed varieties conform to the minimum limit of germination, genetic purity, physical purity, traits, seed health and other seed standards specified in the ‘Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards’.
- Senior functionary of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) Pavel Kussa said: “...On the face of it, this Bill favours seed companies and facilitates ease of doing seeds business. We will study the draft Bill and make our position known to the government and the public.”
- Federation of Seed Industry of India chairman Ajai Rana said the release of the draft is a timely step toward modernising India’s seed regulatory framework.

## ❖ India’s carbon emission rise slower this year, says report

**Context: In 2024, the country’s emissions grew by 4%, but a favourable monsoon, which cut demand for cooling, and a growth in renewable energy use, limited the rise to 1.4%, says Global Carbon Project.**

- **India’s 2025 carbon emissions have increased slowly compared to last year.** While global carbon emissions are expected to rise to 38 billion tonnes, or by 1.1%, this year, the growth in India’s emissions is expected to increase by 1.4%, according to the **Global Carbon Project, an authoritative tracker of fossil fuel emissions.** This is lower than in recent years — in 2024, India’s emissions grew 4% than the previous year.
- The slower increase was partly due to a favourable monsoon that reduced cooling demand, as well as a “strong growth in renewable energy”, leading to lower coal use.

## **Global emission trends**

- **China's emissions in 2025 are projected to increase by 0.4%** — also a slower growth than in recent years. This was due to a “moderate growth in energy consumption combined with an extraordinary growth in renewable energy.”
- **Emissions are projected to grow in the United States (+1.9%) and the European Union (0.4%) in 2025.**
- **Overall, India is the third largest emitter of carbon at 3.2 billion tonnes annually (2024), led by the U.S. (4.9 billion tonnes) and China (12 billion tonnes). India's per capita emission is 2.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, the second lowest among 20 of the largest economies globally. Coal is the major fuel type contributing to India's emissions.**
- The projected rise in global fossil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2025 is driven by all fuel types: coal +0.8%, oil +1%, natural gas +1.3%. Over the 2015-2024 period, emissions from permanent deforestation remained high around 4 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, while permanent removals through reforestation and forest regrowth offsets about half of the permanent deforestation emissions.
- **Total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions — the sum of fossil and land-use change emissions — have grown more slowly in the past decade (0.3% per year), compared to the previous decade (1.9% per year). The remaining carbon budget to limit global warming to 1.5°C is “virtually exhausted”.**
- The remaining budget for 1.5°C is 170 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, equivalent to four years at the 2025 emissions levels.
- “With CO<sub>2</sub> emissions still increasing, keeping global warming below 1.5°C is no longer plausible,” said Professor Pierre Friedlingstein, of Exeter's Global Systems Institute, who led the study. “The remaining carbon budget for 1.5°C, 170 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, will be gone before 2030 at current emission rate. We estimate that climate change is now reducing the combined land and ocean sinks – a clear signal from Planet Earth that we need to dramatically reduce emissions.”
- The latest numbers come even as world leaders are gathered in **Belem, Brazil**, to attempt progress in transitioning away from fossil fuel use while also negotiating how to pay for the costs of bolstering defence against the effects of human-caused climate change already underway.

## **❖ SC wants govt. to promote EVs amid high air pollution**

**Context: Amid worsening air pollution in the national capital, the Supreme Court on Thursday observed that it may be high time to revisit the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020 to promote electric vehicles and even launch a pilot project in metropolitan cities.**

- Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant, advocate Prashant Bhushan, for NGO, Centre for Public Interest Litigation, urged that the government ought to give incentives to encourage consumers to shift to electric-powered vehicles.
- He pointed out that an electric vehicle was costlier than one run on fossil fuel. He said the government must lead the way by transitioning entirely to electric vehicles.

- Attorney-General R. Venkataramani, for the Centre, said a complete shift to electric vehicles was a major policy decision. Justice Kant said five years have gone by since NEMMP 2020.
- “Now, even the policy may have to be revisited. You could start a pilot project in metropolitan cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Madras (Chennai) or Bengaluru,” Justice Kant mooted, listing the case after four weeks.
- The petitioner-NGO had sought the timely implementation of the Electric Vehicle Policy and Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid & Electric Vehicles India scheme.
- In a related development, Supreme Court Judge Justice P.S. Narasimha, heading another Bench on Thursday, asked lawyers to appear virtually in court. Justice Narasimha advised lawyers to take into consideration the worsening pollution in the national capital and not appear physically in court.

### ❖ Centre junks quality control order on polyester fibre, yarn

**Context: The move is expected to benefit the Indian textile industry by making it easier to obtain raw materials at internationally competitive prices.**

- The Centre has revoked the **Quality Control Order (QCO) on polyester fibre and yarn, and PTA and MEG, which was introduced two years ago, bringing relief to the textile industry.**
- In an order dated November 12, 2025, the government said that based on powers conferred by Section 16 of Bureau of Indian Standards Act, it was revoking the orders of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers bringing in QCO on ethylene glycol, terephthalic acid, polyester spun, grey and white yarns, polyester continuous filament yarn, polyester partially oriented yarn, and polyester industrial yarn.
- The government brought in QCOs on polyester yarn, filament, fibre, and raw materials PTA and MEG, thus restricting imports.
- **India has shortage of PTA and MEG and yet the government introduced QCOs. These are critical raw materials for the manmade fibre sector.** The QCOs led to prices increasing by almost ₹4 a kg, said R.K. Vij, Secretary General of the Polyester Textile Apparel Industry Association.
- According to chairman of the Southern India Mills Association Durai Palanisamy, one of the long-pending needs of the industry has been addressed by the government. The QCOs increased the cost of polyester fibre and filament yarn by 30%. The relaxation of the QCO will streamline the import of polyester and its raw materials, ensuring an uninterrupted supply to spinners, weavers, and processors. Competitive imports are expected to stabilise domestic prices, he said.

### ❖ ReNew Energy to invest ₹60,000 cr. in green energy in A.P.

**Context: ReNew Energy Global Plc, a leading de-carbonisation solutions company, on Thursday announced that it would invest ₹60,000 crore (\$6.7 billion) in Andhra Pradesh to set up multiple green energy projects in the State.**

- With this, the company’s total investment in the State goes up to ₹82,000 crore (\$9.3 billion).

- In May this year, the company had committed to invest ₹22,000 crore (U.S. \$2.5 billion) in the State to set up one of India's largest hybrid renewable energy projects.
- In four memoranda of understanding (MoUs) entered into with the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) in the presence of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and IT Minister N. Lokesh, the company announced its plan to invest in establishing a 6 GW PV ingot-wafer plant, a 2 GW pumped hydro project, a 300 KTPA green ammonia facility and 5 GW hybrid projects, including wind-solar and solar-BESS.
- Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Naidu said, "This collaboration will accelerate clean energy deployment, attract high-quality jobs, and contribute meaningfully to sustainable and inclusive growth for the people of the State."
- Sumant Sinha, founder-chairman and CEO of ReNew, said, "ReNew has a long-standing presence in A.P. and, with this expansion, we are bringing a fully integrated clean energy value chain to the State — from wafer to large-scale renewable projects and storage deployment."

### ❖ Exporters welcome govt.'s ₹45,000 cr. export plan, but say more details, allocation needed

**Context: The Export Promotion Mission (EPM) and the credit guarantee scheme for exporters (CGSE) approved by the Union Cabinet has been welcomed by exporter bodies and trade experts, but there is room for more to be done, and higher allocations to be made, some of them said. The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the EPM, which had been initially announced in Budget 2025.**

- The **total outlay of the Mission is ₹25,060 crore and will cover the period 2025-26 to 2030-31.**
- The CGSE aims to provide 100% credit guarantee coverage totaling ₹20,000 crore to lenders on loans they extend to eligible exporters, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- Some trade experts, however, are not as sanguine about the Mission. "Despite its promise, the Mission faces several weaknesses," Ajay Srivastava, former Director General of Foreign Trade and founder of Global Trade Research Initiative said. "Although announced in February, EPM is still only a broad framework. It now needs to be translated into detailed schemes with precise guidelines specifying eligibility, processes, and disbursement rules." Mr. Srivastava said, this would mean it could take months before exporters see benefits.

### ❖ Centre suspends over 4,000 fertiliser distributor licences on hoarding charges

**Context: The Union Department of Fertilisers has cancelled or suspended 4,298 licences and the registration of fertiliser distributors for black marketing, hoarding and diversion of stocks.**

- The Ministry had earlier issued 8,777 show cause notices to the erring traders and 547 FIRs have so far been registered nationwide.
- In a release, the Department said it conducted a comprehensive drive with the Union Agriculture Ministry to secure the national fertiliser supply chain.

- “Working in close coordination with State Governments, effective enforcement action on an unprecedented scale including raids, inspections, and legal measures to curb black marketing, hoarding, and diversion of fertilisers has been taken by the district authorities. These proactive and strict steps taken by the State Governments ensured timely availability, reinforced market discipline, and upheld the integrity of fertiliser distribution across all regions of the country,” the government said.
- The Department said its officials conducted 3,17,054 inspections and raids.
- All enforcement actions were executed under the **Essential Commodities Act and the Fertiliser Control Order,**” the Centre added.

### ❖ Why Hepatitis A deserves a place in India’s universal immunisation programme

**Context: As India debates the inclusion of the typhoid conjugate vaccine in its universal immunisation programme, it is time to ask whether Hepatitis A — a growing cause of acute liver failure — deserves even greater priority.**

- A safe, effective, and long-lasting indigenous vaccine already exists; what is missing is the policy decision. India’s Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has been one of the most successful public health initiatives in the developing world. It eradicated polio, curbed measles deaths, and saved millions of young lives. Yet as the country’s health landscape changes, so too must its immunisation priorities.
- A recent article in The Hindu made a strong case for introducing the typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) into the UIP. The argument is compelling: India bears half of the world’s typhoid burden, manufactures multiple WHO-prequalified TCVs, and yet has not included them in its national schedule.
- However, as we assess new vaccines for inclusion, scientific evidence and public-health impact must guide our choices. On these counts, Hepatitis A vaccination may deserve even higher priority.

#### **On Hepatitis A**

- Hepatitis A, by contrast, is a silent but mounting threat. For decades, the virus infected most Indians in early childhood, causing mild illness and conferring lifelong immunity. With improved sanitation and hygiene, that pattern has changed. Fewer children are exposed early, leaving many adolescents and adults unprotected — groups in whom the disease is far more severe.
- In recent years, multiple outbreaks in Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi have underscored this shift. Hospitals have reported clusters of acute liver failure and even deaths. Unlike typhoid, there is no specific treatment for severe Hepatitis A; recovery often depends on supportive care. Seroprevalence studies reveal a steady decline in protective antibodies — from over 90% two decades ago to less than 60% in many urban regions. The result is a growing pool of susceptible young people vulnerable to serious illness. Hepatitis A is no longer a benign childhood infection; it is an emerging public health concern.

- The good news is that Hepatitis A is entirely preventable. Both live-attenuated and inactivated vaccines offer protection rates exceeding 90 to 95%, with immunity lasting for at least 15 to 20 years — often lifelong. India has its own indigenous success story here. Biological E's Biovac-A, a live-attenuated vaccine developed domestically, has been used in the private sector for more than two decades with excellent safety and efficacy records.
- Unlike typhoid vaccines, Hepatitis A vaccines do not face issues of waning immunity, antibiotic resistance, or carrier states. A single dose of the live vaccine can confer durable, long-term protection. From a public health perspective, it is a model vaccine: safe, effective, long-lasting, and already made in India.
- Both typhoid and Hepatitis A cause significant illness, but their epidemiology and control prospects differ sharply. Typhoid mortality has declined with prompt antibiotic treatment and better sanitation, though antimicrobial resistance remains a concern. Hepatitis A, on the other hand, strikes indiscriminately across socio-economic groups, lacks specific treatment, and increasingly affects older children and young adults, where the disease is more severe.

### Measurable criteria

- When judged by measurable criteria — disease burden, vaccine efficacy, durability, cost-effectiveness, and programmatic simplicity — the balance tilts decisively toward Hepatitis A. It is the low-hanging fruit of vaccine-preventable diseases: a single-dose, long-lasting, with an indigenous product ready for universal use.
- India could begin by introducing Hepatitis A vaccination in States that have experienced repeated outbreaks or show declining antibody prevalence. The vaccine can be co-administered with existing boosters such as DPT or MR, using the same infrastructure. Periodic serosurveys can track population immunity and guide expansion. This phased approach aligns with the UIP's proven model of gradual, evidence-based rollout.
- This is not an argument against typhoid vaccination; it is a plea for rational sequencing. Typhoid control is important, but Hepatitis A control is both easier and more cost-effective at this stage. The disease burden is substantial, the vaccine is home-grown, and the science is clear.
- India's immunisation programme has repeatedly shown foresight — from the early inclusion of Hepatitis B to the introduction of rotavirus and pneumococcal vaccines. Adding Hepatitis A would be a natural next step in that continuum of progress.

### ❖ How is SEC ensuring fair elections?

**Context: Following the Supreme Court's directions, Maharashtra will hold local body elections in three phases, beginning on December 2. The first phase covers 246 municipal councils and 42 nagar panchayats, while the second will include 32 of 34 zilla parishads and 336 of 351 panchayat samitis.**

- The municipal corporation elections will be held in the last phase. The court has directed that all elections be completed by January 31, 2026. The exercise comes amid opposition criticism of errors and duplication in the voters' lists.

### **Can the State Election Commission delete duplicate names?**

- No. The State Election Commission (SEC) does not have the right to add or delete names from the voters' lists. As per constitutional provisions, 'superintendence, direction and control of the conduct of elections to urban and rural local bodies vest in the SEC.' However, under the provisions of the five different Local Body Acts of the State, the SEC does not prepare a separate voters' list for these elections. Instead, it uses the voter's lists prepared by the Election Commission under the Representation of the People Act, 1950, by bifurcating them to represent the relevant wards of the local bodies concerned.
- For the upcoming local body elections, the Maharashtra SEC will use the electoral list as of July 1, 2025, which means the list containing inclusions and changes made by the Chief Electoral Officer up to that date. However, the cut-off date for first-time voters was not revised after January 1, 2025. As a result, young voters who turned 18 after January 2025 have expressed disappointment at being unable to vote in the forthcoming elections.

### **What does the SEC do?**

- The SEC is responsible for the delimitation of all the Assembly constituencies in wards. This involves dividing the names of voters listed under each Assembly constituency into the respective wards.
- Under the revised voters' list programme, beginning November 20, the SEC will invite objections and suggestions on the draft voters' lists for the municipal corporation elections. The exercise will continue until December 12 and include the publication of the draft voters' list on November 20, followed by the submission of objections and suggestions until November 27. The final ward-wise voters' lists, after incorporating valid objections and suggestions, will be published on December 5.
- The list of polling centres will be published on December 8, and the final polling centre-wise voters' list will be released on December 12.

### **Will the exercise address the issues raised by the Opposition?**

- The Opposition has said that the revised programme does not address all the issues they had raised. For example, they raised issues about the electoral lists' opaqueness, double voters, bulk voters on the same address, voters with zero address, and illegal names from outside the State registered in the list.
- The SEC officials said that during the revision exercise, four kinds of objections can be raised: when a voter's name appears in the Assembly election list but is missing from the local body list; when a voter's name is assigned to the wrong ward; when there are duplicate entries; and when multiple voters are registered at the same address.
- While the SEC cannot add or delete names, it will mark double and doubtful entries, officials said. A tool will be used to identify duplicate names on the Assembly voters' list using four filters: first name, middle name, last name, and gender. When the Chief Electoral Officers receive the list of duplicate names, they will mark these entries with stars and undertake a field verification.

- Here, the voters will have to give an undertaking about the booth at which they will vote. These undertakings will be kept with the marked copies of the electoral rolls at each polling centre to ensure that no voter votes in more than one place.
- The Opposition, however, has questioned the feasibility of the exercise in such a short span. “Also, what if the list itself is defective? Clearly, nothing can be done about it, since it comes under the purview of the Central Election Commission. This does not address the many concerns we have raised,” an Opposition leader said.

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## ❖ Government notifies Digital Personal Data Protection Act

**Context: The Union government notified large parts of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, addressing the need for a law to protect the data privacy of Indian citizens.**

- The DPDP Rules, 2025 are also a significant step forward in compliance with the Supreme Court's 2017 **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India** judgment affirming the right to privacy.
- The law, passed in August 2023 in Parliament, requires firms to safeguard the digital data of Indian citizens, with exemptions for the “State and its instrumentalities”, and prescribes penalties for firms that breach these obligations.
- Meanwhile, transparency activists have said the law weakens the Right to Information Act, 2005 by removing the obligation of government bodies to provide “personal information” if the public interest outweighs a public official’s right to privacy.
- That amendment is in force. However, “data fiduciaries”, who collect and use personal data, will have until November 2026 to comply with some provisions, such as putting out the details of their designated Data Protection Officer. That same month, the Consent Manager framework, which allows firms to exercise data removal and amendment rights on behalf of “data principals” (users), will also come into force.
- It may take until May 2027 for large tech firms to be subject to the full force of the Act, which also provides for the constitution of the Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) by the Centre.
- Another notification — there were a total of four on Friday — sets the number of members in the DPBI at four. The board can hold inquiries in response to complaints and impose penalties in case of data breaches. The board’s members, who have not yet been chosen, will be appointed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- The DPDP Act, 2023, has gone through three major drafts since 2017, with the first draft in 2018 imposing conditions like data localisation that were furiously resisted by technology firms. The latest version of the Act, which strips out many of the requirements of the original draft, has been relatively better received among large Indian and global tech firms, which as “significant data fiduciaries,” would face additional compliance requirements.
- Nasscom, which represents the main IT and technology firms, said in a statement issued through its Data Security Council of India (DSCI) initiative that it welcomed the Rules, but had problems with the Act that could not be solved by “subordinate legislation”, such as tight rules around parental consent and short disclosure deadlines for breaches.

### Closer to compliance

With key parts of the DPDP Act now notified, the government edges closer to enforcing the 2017 Supreme Court privacy judgment and strengthening protections for Indians’ personal data



**Aug. 2017:** The Supreme Court rules that privacy is a **fundamental right**

**July 2018:** Retd. Justice **B.N. Srikrishna**-led committee submits its

report and a draft data protection Bill

**Dec. 2022:** A fresh **draft Bill** prepared by the IT Ministry

**Aug. 2023:** Parliament passes the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**

**Jan. 2025:** Draft rules to enforce the Act are put out for **public consultation**

- “On international data transfers, Nasscom-DSCI recognises the importance of developing mechanisms that support interoperability and facilitate co-operation with India’s key trading partners,” Nasscom said.
- Delhi-based digital rights advocacy Internet Freedom Foundation said the notified Rules “do not address key structural concerns repeatedly raised by civil society” and rued the fact that they “[defer] most core obligations and rights” by a year and a half. The Rules “provides statutory backing for enabling personal data collection by state agencies with scant oversight, thereby entrenching state control over personal data,” the IFF said.

### ❖ India is pursuing FTAs with multiple countries: Goyal

**Context: Union Minister of Industries & Commerce Piyush Goyal said India was holding negotiations with the European Union, the U.S., Oman, New Zealand, Chile, Peru, and a host of other countries to facilitate the free flow of capital, goods and services.**

- “These **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** are coming at a time when the world order is being rewritten and there has been tremendous volatility all around as a consequence. Indian industries should be resilient in this scenario in order to benefit all of humanity,” he observed.
- Delivering his inaugural address at the 30th CII Partnership Summit-2025 in Visakhapatnam on Friday, Mr. Goyal said India was like an oasis in the desert amid the churning that was taking place in the world, as it enjoyed the trust of many countries.
- “The adoption of technology is a must for prosperity, and that trust has to be built through righteousness, for which global trade ties are being fostered,” he said.

### ❖ CJJ to deal with claim that HC judge approached NCLAT member on order

**Context: The Supreme Court trained the spotlight on Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, saying the top judge “must have” acted on the anguish of a judicial member on the Chennai Bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) who chose to recuse after recording in an order that “one of the most revered members of the higher judiciary” approached him for a decision favouring one of the parties in a high-stakes case.**

- A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said the matter was of “vital public importance” and the “law must take its course”.
- The NCLAT’s Chennai Bench led by the judicial member in question, Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma, passed the order on August 13 in an appeal filed by A.S. Reddy, the suspended director of Hyderabad-based KLSR Infratech, which is facing corporate insolvency resolution proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. Justice Sharma is a retired Uttarakhand High Court judge, who was appointed to the NCLAT.
- The Supreme Court Bench was hearing a petition filed by M/s. AS Met Corp Pvt Ltd, the operational creditor of KLSR Infratech and the first respondent in the case.

### **'Interference by judge'**

- “The judicial member has preserved the WhatsApp message he received and the number. The message came from the Chief Justice of a High Court... That is why the judicial member recused,” advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing M/s. AS Met Corp Pvt Ltd, alleged.
- “We believe the competent authority [Chief Justice of India] must have examined the available material and taken necessary steps as required. All these issues will be effectively dealt with by the Chief Justice of India on the administrative side,” the Bench headed by Justice Kant observed. Justice Kant is taking over as Chief Justice of India after the retirement of Justice Gavai on November 24.
- The court, passing orders on the judicial side, transferred the case from Chennai to the Principal Bench of the NCLAT based in New Delhi.

### **❖ Manipur tribal body seeks removal of 'AnyKuki Tribes' category**

**Context: The Thadou Inpi Manipur (TIM), the apex body of Manipur's Thadou community, has urged the BJP to undo what it described as the damage caused by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in 2003 through the introduction of the "Any Kuki Tribes" (AKT) category in the State's list of Scheduled Tribes.**

- The TIM said the present NDA government must rectify the blunder made by the first BJP-led NDA government more than two decades ago, “to ensure fairness, national security, and the integrity of Manipur”.
- The organisation had earlier said foreigners, specifically those who cross over from Myanmar, have been using the “redundant” AKT category to be considered Scheduled Tribes in India.
- “A legislative action is needed in Parliament to delete the AKT category, introduced by the NDA government in 2003, from the Scheduled Tribe's list of Manipur,” TIM's joint general secretary Manggou Thadou said on Friday after members of the organisation submitted a memorandum to senior BJP leaders B.L. Santhosh and Sambit Patra in Imphal.
- The TIM team also sought the inclusion of Thadou representatives as legitimate stakeholders in any future dialogue, peace talks, or government-led negotiation platforms to ensure long-term peace and restore political stability in Manipur.
- It stated that Manipur deserved a democratically elected government after a prolonged period of President's Rule, in effect since February 13.
- The TIM further asserted the distinct ethnic identity of the Thadou community. “Thadou is not Kuki, or underneath Kuki, or part of Kuki, but independent of Kuki,” it said.

## ❖ Gujarat's Ambaji marble gets GI tag for its quality

**Context: Marble from Ambaji, Gujarat's prominent pilgrimage site and Shaktipeeth, has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its high-quality white stone, an official said.**

- The Geographical Indications Registry under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has granted the tag in the name of the Ambaji Marbles Quarry and Factory Association in Banaskantha district.
- A GI tag recognises products that possess unique qualities or characteristics linked to their geographical origin.
- Banaskantha District Collector Mihir Patel said that the Centre's approval marks a proud moment for the region. "The Government of India has granted the prestigious GI tag to the pure white marble sourced from the sacred land of Ambaji. Along with its spiritual significance, Ambaji Shaktipeeth has now earned a distinguished place on the global map of the marble industry," he said.

### Used in religious sites

- Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel also welcomed the development on X, saying the recognition was a matter of "joy and pride for Gujarat". He noted that Ambaji marble, known for its shine and beauty, has long been used in construction of religious sites.
- Ambaji-based marble industrialist Kiranbhai Trivedi said the recognition reflects the stone's exceptional quality. He noted that Ambaji's marble mines date back 1,200–1,500 years, around the time the Dilwara Jain Temple in Mount Abu was constructed.
- The enduring beauty of the temple, he said, is proof of the marble's remarkable durability. "In comparison, even the stones of the Taj Mahal show ageing, but Ambaji marble has never lost its purity," he remarked.
- Known for its strength and high calcium content, the marble has also been used in temple construction in the U.S., New Zealand and England, he said.

## ❖ India, Canada cement ties on trade, critical minerals, investment

**Context: Both countries agreed to 'identify and expand investment and trading opportunities in aerospace and dual-use capabilities partnerships'.**

- India and Canada agreed to bolster long-term supply chain partnerships in critical minerals and expand investment and trade opportunities, the two countries said in a joint statement.
- The statement, issued, followed a visit to New Delhi by Maninder Sidhu, Canada's Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade, and Economic Development, from November 11 to 14 at the invitation of Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal.
- According to the statement, the two Ministers "agreed to encourage long-term supply chain partnerships in critical minerals and clean energy collaboration essential for energy transition, and new-age industrial expansion".
- Mr. Goyal and Mr. Sidhu also agreed to "identify and expand investment and trading opportunities in aerospace and dual-use capabilities partnerships".

- The engagement between the two countries has gained momentum again following the direction provided by the Prime Ministers of India and Canada during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G7 meeting in Kananaskis, Canada.

### Renewing momentum

- The foreign ministers of both countries had earlier issued a statement aimed at “renewing momentum towards a stronger partnership”, and which identified trade as the cornerstone of bilateral economic growth and resilience.

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