



PRAYAAS TIMES

CA CAPSULE

JANUARY-2025 Compilation (Eng)

MPSC

Table of Contents

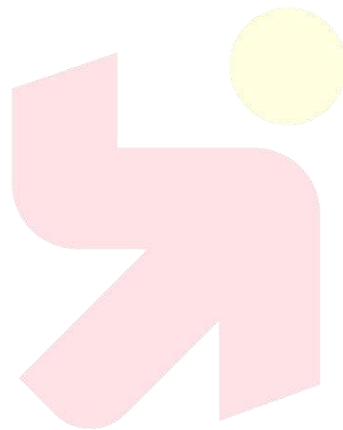
Political & Constitutional	1	International	6
1. Demand to Hold Parliament Sessions Outside Delhi	1	1. 19th G20 Summit 2024	6
1.1 Constitutional Provisions Regarding Parliamentary Sessions:.....	1	1.1 Key Highlights of the Summit:	6
2. Attempt to Impeach Allahabad High Court Judge	1	1.2 G-20 (Group of 20):	6
2.1 Constitutional Protections and Grounds for Impeachment:.....	1	2. ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024	6
2.2 Stages of the Impeachment Process:.....	1	2.1 2025 - UN International Year of Cooperatives:.....	7
2.3 Past Impeachment Attempts:.....	2	3. India Ranks 49th in Network Readiness Index 2024	7
3. Inauguration of India's First Constitution Museum at O.P. Jindal University.....	2	3.1 India's Global Rankings in Key Areas:	7
4. "Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Swabhimaan" Campaign	2	3.2 Top Countries in the Index:.....	7
5. Unveiling of Sanskrit and Maithili Translations of the Constitution.....	2	4. India to Chair the 68th Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs	7
5.1 Official Languages: Key Divisions Level Articles Key Provision	3	5. Global Soil Conference (GSC) 2024	7
5.2 Important Articles.....	3	6. India: Fastest-Growing G20 Economy	7
5.3 Amendments that added languages:.....	3	6.1 Comparative Growth Forecasts:	8
5.4 Classical Languages	3	7. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah: Namibia's First Female President	8
5.5 Important Points for Exams.....	3	8. World Maritime Technology Conference (WMTC) 2024: Chennai.....	8
6. Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) 2023.....	3	9. 2nd India-CARICOM Summit	8
7. Supreme Court Directives Against Filing New Cases Regarding Places of Worship	4	9.1 About Caribbean Community (CARICOM):	8
7.1 The Places of Worship Act, 1991:.....	4	10. Regime Change in Syria	9
8. No-Confidence Motion Notice Against Rajya Sabha Chairman.....	4	11. Switzerland Suspends India's MFN Status	9
8.1 Constitutional Basis:.....	4	11.1 Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) Status:	9
9. Demand for Review of Dowry and Domestic Violence Laws	4	12. Romania and Bulgaria Join the Schengen Zone .	9
10. Hemant Soren Sworn in as Jharkhand CM for the Fourth Time	5	12.1 About the Schengen Zone:.....	9
11. Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill Passed in Lok Sabha	5	13. India Re-elected to the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).....	9
11.1 Key Features:.....	5	14. Indian-American Kash Patel to be New FBI Director.....	9
12. Ban on 'ULFA' under UAPA.....	5	15. 4th Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)	9
13. First Constitution Day Celebration in J&K Since 1950	5	16. Indian Students Top U.S. Academic Enrollments	9
14. 'Sarai Kale Khan Chowk' Renamed 'Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk'	5	17. Valdecy Urquiza is the New Secretary General of INTERPOL.....	10
		18. New Constitution Approved in Gabon via Historic Referendum	10
		19. Iraq's First National Census in 40 Years	10

20. Armenia Becomes 104th Full Member of International Solar Alliance (ISA).....	10	8. Paryatan Mitra and Paryatan Didi Initiative	16
21. International Gita Mahotsav 2024.....	10	9. Vima Sakhi Scheme.....	16
22. Harmeet Dhillon Selected as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights	10	10. India's First Green Hydrogen Fueling Station in Leh.....	16
23. François Bayrou: New Prime Minister of France	10	11. Trial of India's First Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge Completed	16
Maharashtra.....	11	12. India's First 'Uber Shikara' Service Launched in Srinagar	17
1. Devendra Fadnavis Appointed Chief Minister for the Third Time	11	13. Mission Arun Himveer	17
1.1 Political Journey:	11	14. Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics (BAHS) 2024	17
1.2 Chief Ministers of Maharashtra: Key Facts	11	14.1 Key Highlights of BAHS 2024:.....	17
1.3 List of Key Chief Ministers	11	15. Scheme for Development of 40 Tourist Destinations in 23 States	17
2. India's First Seabed Cleanup Drive in Malvan....	12	15.1 SASCI Scheme:.....	18
3. 'Vatsalya' Scheme for Maternal and Child Health Wins National 'SKOCH' Award	12	16. Bharatiya Vayuyan (Indian Aviation) Bill 2024	18
4. Maharashtra Ranks Third in Organic Production	12	17. Increase in Agricultural Employment.....	18
5. First Cabinet Expansion	12	17.1 Factors:.....	18
5.1 Portfolio Allocation in Maharashtra Government:.....	12	18. Small Finance Banks (SFBs) Allowed to Provide UPI-Based Loans	18
5.1.1 Cabinet Ministers:.....	12	19. Justice Nawab Singh Committee Report on Agricultural Crisis	18
5.1.2 Ministers of State:.....	13	20. Europe's Digital Euro.....	18
6. Livestock Census Commences Across the State	13	21. Sagarmanthan: The Great Ocean Dialogue	18
7. Kalidas Kolambkar as Pro-tem Speaker for Special Session	14	22. E-Daakhil Portal.....	19
8. Adv. Rahul Narwekar Unanimously Elected as Assembly Speaker.....	14	23. 5G AI-RAN	19
9. Shivaji Maharaj Statue Work Awarded to Ram Sutar's Company.....	14	24. India's First AI Data Bank.....	19
Economy.....	14	25. India's First Self-Sustaining Gaushala in Gwalior	19
1. Sanjay Malhotra: New Governor of RBI.....	14	26. Sanraksha App.....	19
1.1 RBI Governor: Key Facts	14	Social Affairs	19
1.2 Notable RBI Governors	14	1. Reconsideration of the New Population Policy	19
1.3 Powers and Functions:.....	15	1.1 Need for a New Population Policy in India?	19
2. India's 10-Year Coffee Growth Plan	15	2. One Nation One Subscription (ONOS)	20
2.1 Highlights:	15	3. Child Marriage Free India Campaign	20
3. 'Jalvahak' Scheme.....	15	4. SHe-Box Portal.....	20
4. National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)	15	5. 'Ann Chakra' and 'SCAN' for PDS Reform	20
5. India's Cumulative FDI Inflow Exceeds \$1 Trillion	15	6. QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025	20
5.1 Top Source Countries:.....	15	7. Nai Chetna 3.0.....	21
6. Bhu-Neer Portal	16	8. Ashta Lakshmi Mahotsav	21
7. PM-WANI.....	16	9. SheSTEM 2024.....	21

10. Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana.....	21	5.2 Findings Regarding India:	26
11. Access to Medicine Index Report 2024.....	21	6. Global Plastic Treaty.....	26
11.1 Key Highlights:	21	6.1 Reasons for Failure to Reach Consensus:26	
12. Atal Innovation Mission 2.0 (AIM 2.0)	21	7. Cyclone Fengal Hits Tamil Nadu and Puducherry	27
12.1 Key Programs under AIM 2.0:.....	21		
12.2 Core Pillars of AIM (Established in 2016):	21	8. Lake-Effect Snow.....	27
		8.1 Mechanism:	27
13. Assessment of Universal Foundational Literacy in India	22	9. 24 Coastal Villages in Odisha Receive UNESCO 'Tsunami Ready' Recognition	27
14. PM-ABHIM (PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission)	22	10. Andhra Pradesh Government Abolishes Garbage Tax.....	27
15. India Skills Report 2025	22	11. China Opens First Atmospheric Monitoring Station in Antarctica	27
16. Sickle Cell Eradication Postage Stamp.....	22	12. Nano Bubble Tech to Purify Delhi Zoo Pond Water	28
17. Hornbill Festival	22		
18. Ni-kshay Vahan	22	Science and Technology	28
19. VISION Portal.....	22	1. 'One Day One Genome' Initiative	28
20. Gyan-Kumbh 2024	22	1.1 About the Initiative:	28
21. 'The Teacher App'	23	1.2 Potential Benefits:.....	28
22. UNESCO Status for West Bengal	23	2. Nafithromycin: India's Indigenous Antibiotic ...	28
23. Telangana's Rythu Bharosa Scheme.....	23	3. Centenary of Bose-Einstein Statistics	28
24. Google-NCERT Partnership.....	23	3.1 Who was Satyendra Nath Bose?.....	28
25. Gita Jayanti 2024 Records	23	3.2 Key Concepts:	29
Environment	23	4. SVASTIK Initiative	29
1. 56th and 57th Tiger Reserves of the Country	23	5. Bioplastics	29
1.1 Guru Ghasidas - Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve:.....	23	6. DHARINI: 3D Fetal Brain Atlas	29
1.2 Ratapani Tiger Reserve:.....	23	7. GenCast: Google's AI Model	29
1.3 Recently Notified Tiger Reserves:	23	7.1 Sora:.....	29
1.4 The Tiger (Panthera tigris):	23	8. 10th India International Science Festival (IISF) 2024 at IIT Guwahati.....	29
1.5 States with Most Tigers:	24	9. Bacteria for Solving Mathematical Problems.....	30
1.6 Tiger Reserves with Most Tigers:	24	10. ICMR's 'First in the World Challenge' for Innovation.....	30
1.7 Records:	24	11. Google's Quantum Computing Breakthrough	30
1.8 Tiger Reserves in Maharashtra:.....	24	11.1 Classical vs. Quantum Computing:	30
2. UNCCD COP16 Summit	24	12. Disease X	30
3. Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2025	25	13. IISc Unveils STRONG	30
3.1 Rankings:	25	14. Nanopore Technology	31
3.2 Bottom Performers:	25	14.1 Applications:	31
3.3 India's Performance:.....	25		
3.4 About the Index:	25	Defense and Space	31
4. Shanghai Leads in Greenhouse Gas Emissions	26	1. Launch of GSAT-N2 (GSAT-20) Satellite	31
4.1 Emission Trends:.....	26	2. Axiom-4 Mission	31
5. Global Decline in Freshwater Reserves	26		
5.1 Key Findings:	26		

3. India's First Long-Range Hypersonic Missile Trial	31	9. Coal India Limited Wins the 2024 Green World Environment Award.....	36
4. MOI-TD: India's First AI Lab in Space.....	31	10. Victoria Kjær Theilvig Becomes Denmark's First Miss Universe.....	36
5. PSLV-C59/PROBA-3 Mission	31	11. Bharati Kolli Honored as an Emerging Star in Banking	36
6. Zorawar – Indian Light Tank (ILT)	32	Sports.....	36
7. ISRO and ASA Cooperation for Gaganyaan	32	1. D. Gukesh: The Youngest World Chess Champion	36
8. INSV Tarini: Global Circumnavigation "Navika Sagar Parikrama II"	32	1.1 About D. Gukesh:	37
9. Aditya-L1 and Proba-3: Solar Research Duo	32	2. Jay Shah: Youngest Chairman in ICC History.....	37
10. Successful Test-Fire of K-4 Missile from INS Arighaat	32	2.1 Indians who have headed the ICC:	37
10.1 K-4 Missile Features:	32	2.2 About the ICC:	37
10.2 INS Arighaat:	32	3. India to Host First-Ever Kho-Kho World Cup in 2025	37
11. Dr. Jayathirth Joshi - New Head of BrahMos Aerospace.....	33	4. India Wins Fifth Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup .	37
11.1 About Dr. Jayathirth Joshi:	33	5. FIFA World Cup Hosts for 2030 and 2034.....	38
11.2 BrahMos Aerospace:	33	6. Verstappen Wins Fourth Consecutive F1 Championship (2024)	38
12. Optical Fiber in Siachen	33	7. Magnus Carlsen Wins Tata Steel Chess India 2024	38
13. Eklavya Platform.....	33	7.1 Winners of Tata Steel Chess India 2024: .	38
14. India Adopts CubeSat Standards	33	8. IPL 2025 Auction	38
14.1 CubeSat:	34	9. Kush Maini: First Indian to win F2 Constructors' Championship.....	38
15. Earth Copilot.....	34	10. FIFA Unveils NASA-Inspired Club World Cup Trophy.....	38
16. CINBAX	34	11. Mithali Raj Appointed Mentor for ACA Women's Cricket Operations.....	39
17. Harimau Shakti Exercise.....	34	12. Indian Women's Team Retains Asian Champions Trophy Title	39
Awards and Books	34	13. Olympic Medalist Emma McKeon Announces Retirement.....	39
1. Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad Conferred with Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2023.....	34	14. India's Divith Reddy Wins Under-8 World Champion Title	39
1.1 Daniel Barenboim:.....	34	15. Bangladesh Wins 'Under-19 Asia Cup' Title	39
1.2 Ali Abu Awwad:	34	16. Shaheen Afridi – Youngest to 100 Wickets in All Formats	39
1.3 About the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize:	34	17. Nandan Kumar Jha Elected President of IMSA .	39
2. Madhav Gadgil Honored with UN 'Champions of the Earth' Lifetime Achievement Award.....	35	Personalities in the News.....	39
2.1 About Madhav Gadgil:	35	1. Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna (S. M. Krishna)....	39
3. Donald Trump: TIME Person of the Year 2024	35	1.1 Political Career:	39
3.1 Recent Winners:.....	35	1.2 Awards:.....	40
4. "My Beloved Life" by Amitav Kumar	35	2. Zakir Hussain	40
5. Payal Kapadia's Golden Globe Nomination	35		
6. "The Kumbaya Story" Wins TVE Global Sustainability Film Award.....	35		
7. National Gopal Ratna Award 2024.....	35		
7.1 Award Categories:	36		
8. Global Award for Digital Innovations to Hyderabad Airport.....	36		

2.1 Awards & Honors:.....	40	1. Political and Constitutional.....	41
2.2 Musical Journey:.....	40	2. Global and International	41
3. Prof. Amiya Kumar Bagchi.....	40	3. Maharashtra Special.....	41
3.1 Academic Career:.....	41	4. Economy and Government Schemes.....	42
3.2 Institutional Contributions:.....	41	5. Science, Technology, and Environment.....	42
3.3 Public & Professional Roles:.....	41	6. Awards and Sports	42
One liners :.....	41		



PRAYAAS

Political & Constitutional

1. Demand to Hold Parliament Sessions Outside Delhi

- **YSR Congress Party MP Madila Gurumoorthy** wrote a letter to Prime Minister Modi requesting that two parliamentary sessions be organized in South India every year.
- In the letter, he highlighted the logistical and climatic challenges faced by MPs during the extreme winters and summers of Delhi.
- The idea of holding parliamentary sessions outside Delhi has previously been supported by figures such as **Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar** and **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.



1.1 Constitutional Provisions Regarding Parliamentary Sessions:

- **The Constitution of India does not mandate a specific location for holding a parliamentary session.**
- According to **Article 85** of the Indian Constitution, the President shall from time to time summon each House of Parliament to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit.
- However, the **interval between the last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session must not exceed six months.**
- The President is empowered to summon the Houses at a time and place of their choosing, ensuring **that no more than six months pass between two sessions.**
- Traditionally, however, all sessions are held at the Parliament House in the national capital, New Delhi.

2. Attempt to Impeach Allahabad High Court Judge

- **A six-member delegation of opposition MPs from the Rajya Sabha submitted a resolution to the Secretary-General of the Upper House demanding the impeachment of Allahabad High Court Judge Shekhar Kumar Yadav.**
- Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav is accused of delivering hate speech at a Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) event, inciting communal disharmony, and making several controversial statements.
- Impeachment Process for Judges in India:
- Although the **word 'impeachment' is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution for judges**, the process of removing a judge by Parliament is commonly referred to as 'impeachment.'
- The impeachment process in India serves as a crucial mechanism to maintain judicial accountability while preserving the independence of the judiciary.

2.1 Constitutional Protections and Grounds for Impeachment:

- **Article 124(4):** A judge of the Supreme Court shall not be removed from office except by an order of the President passed after an address by each House of Parliament supported by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting has been presented to the President in the same session.
- **Grounds for removal:** Proved misbehaviour or incapacity.
- **Article 218:** According to Article 218, the procedure for the removal of Supreme Court judges mentioned in **Article 124(4)** applies to High Court judges as well.

2.2 Stages of the Impeachment Process:

2.2.1 Initiation of the Resolution:

- The impeachment motion **must be supported by at least 100 members in the Lok Sabha or 50 members in the Rajya Sabha.**
- The Speaker (Lok Sabha) or Chairman (Rajya Sabha) may review the material and consult individuals before deciding whether to admit or reject the motion.
- **Example:** In 2018, the motion against Chief Justice Dipak Misra was rejected after due consideration.

2.2.2 Constitution of an Inquiry Committee:

- Once the motion is admitted, the Speaker or Chairman **constitutes a three-member committee.**

- The committee includes: **the Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court Judge; a Chief Justice of a High Court; and a distinguished jurist.**
- This committee investigates the charges thoroughly, collects evidence, and examines witnesses to determine the validity of the allegations.

2.2.3 Committee Report and Parliamentary Debate:

- The committee **submits its findings to the Presiding Officer of the House** where the motion was introduced. If the judge is found guilty of proved misbehaviour or incapacity, the report is debated in Parliament.
- Both Houses must pass the resolution with a **special majority**:
 - A majority of the total membership of the House.
 - Two-thirds of the members present and voting.

2.3 Past Impeachment Attempts:

- **Justice V. Ramaswami of the Supreme Court was the first judge in the history of independent India to face impeachment proceedings.**
- The motion was brought to the Lok Sabha in 1993 but failed because it could not secure the required two-thirds majority; hence, he remained in office.
- Subsequent attempts were made against: Justice P.D. Dinakaran (Karnataka HC, 2009); Justice Soumitra Sen (Calcutta HC, 2011); Justice J.B. Pardiwala (Gujarat HC); Justice S.K. Gangele (Madhya Pradesh HC, 2015); and Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra (2018). However, none of these reached completion for various reasons.
- To date, **no judge in India has been removed from office through the process of impeachment.**

3. Inauguration of India's First Constitution Museum at O.P. Jindal University

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated **India's first Constitution Museum at O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) in Sonapat, Haryana.**
- The primary objective of this museum is to enhance public understanding of the Constitution.
- This is the first facility of its kind in India to use AI-driven interactive exhibits, 3D equipment, and multimedia formats to educate visitors about the history and significance of the Indian Constitution.



4. "Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Swabhimaan" Campaign

- President Murmu launched a year-long campaign titled "**Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Swabhimaan**" (**Our Constitution, Our Pride**).
- A commemorative coin and postage stamps were also released to mark the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution.
- The campaign aims to celebrate the contributions of the makers of the Constitution and to promote its fundamental values across the country.



5. Unveiling of Sanskrit and Maithili Translations of the Constitution

- Coinciding with Constitution Day and the 75th anniversary of its adoption, **President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the Sanskrit and Maithili translations of the Indian Constitution in New Delhi.**
- **The Government of India has undertaken an ambitious project to translate the Constitution into all 22 scheduled languages listed in the Eighth Schedule.**
- Historical Context: The people of India adopted the Constitution on **November 26, 1949**, and it came into effect on **January 26, 1950**. The year 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of this historic milestone.
- Since 2015, November 26 has been celebrated as Constitution Day to commemorate its adoption and to raise constitutional awareness among citizens.
- Constitutional Provisions Regarding Language

- Provisions related to language are found in **Part XVII (Part 17)** of the Indian Constitution, spanning **Articles 343 to 351**.

5.1 Official Languages: Key Divisions

Level	Articles	Key Provision
Language of the Union	343 - 344	The official language of the Union shall be Hindi (Devanagari script).
Regional Languages	345 - 347	States have the right to choose their own official language(s).
Language of the Judiciary	348 - 349	The language of the Supreme Court and High Courts shall be English.
Special Directives	350 - 351	Protection of minority languages and directives for the spread of Hindi.

5.2 Important Articles

- Article 343:** The official language of the Union is Hindi in Devanagari script. However, English was allowed to continue for the first 15 years (until 1965).
- Article 345:** Official language(s) of a State (e.g., Marathi for Maharashtra).
- Article 348:** Until Parliament provides otherwise by law, all proceedings in the Supreme Court and every High Court shall be in English.
- Article 350 (A):** Facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage.
- Article 350 (B):** Appointment of a Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities.
- Article 351:** It is the duty of the Union to promote the spread and development of the Hindi language.
- The Eighth Schedule**
 - Currently, the 8th Schedule of the Constitution includes **22 official languages**. The original Constitution contained only 14.

5.3 Amendments that added languages:

- 21st Amendment (1967):** Added Sindhi.
- 71st Amendment (1992):** Added Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali (KMN).
- 92nd Amendment (2003):** Added Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali (BDMS).

5.4 Classical Languages

- The Government of India grants the status of "**Classical Language**" to certain languages based on their antiquity. Currently, the following languages hold this status:
 - Tamil (2004 - The first classical language)**
 - Sanskrit (2005)**
 - Telugu (2008)**
 - Kannada (2008)**
 - Malayalam (2013)**
 - Odia (2014)**
 - Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali (Newly included in 2024)**

5.5 Important Points for Exams

- India has no "National Language";** Hindi is the "Official Language".
- The President** has the authority to appoint the **Official Language Commission**.
- The first Official Language Commission** was appointed in **1955** under the chairmanship of **B.G. Kher**.

6. Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) 2023

- The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (MoPPP)** unveiled the **Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI 2023)**.
- Objective:** To evaluate and improve the grievance redressal mechanisms of various Central Ministries and Departments in India.
- Conceptualization:** GRAI was conceptualized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) based on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of MoPPP.
- Structure:** The index is based on **4 dimensions (Efficiency, Feedback, Domain, and Organizational Commitment)** and **11 indicators**. It evaluates 89 Central Ministries and Departments, enabling a comparative analysis of grievance handling.

- **Data Source:** Data was collected from the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Management System (CPGRAMS), ensuring a standardized evaluation process.
- **About CPGRAMS:**
 - **An online platform available 24/7 for citizens to voice grievances to public authorities regarding any issue related to service delivery.**
 - Recognized as a **"Best Practice"** by the Commonwealth Secretariat.
 - A vital tool for citizens to file and track grievances, enhancing transparency in public service.
- **Report Findings:**
 - **85 out of 89 ministries showed improvement** in their GRAI score compared to the previous year.
 - Approximately 10% of ministries/departments achieved an increase of more than 50%, while 28% recorded an increase between 25-50%.

7. Supreme Court Directives Against Filing New Cases Regarding Places of Worship

- **The Supreme Court directed that no court should entertain any new lawsuit regarding religious sites or shrines until the petitions challenging the validity of the Places of Worship Act, 1991 are resolved.**
- **Restrictions:** The Supreme Court also prohibited issuing any orders or granting permission for surveys related to such cases.
- **Current Status:** The Court has granted time to the Central Government to file a response to the petitions challenging the validity of the 1991 Act.

7.1 The Places of Worship Act, 1991:

- Passed during the Congress government of **Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao** to calm the intensity of the Ram Mandir movement.
- **Prohibition:** It prohibits changing or converting the character of any place of worship.
- **Cut-off Date:** **It states that the religious identity of any place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947, shall be maintained.**
- **Pending Cases:** Any suit, appeal, or proceeding regarding the conversion of the religious character of a place of worship pending before any court or authority shall abate (end), and no new suits can be filed.
- **Exception:** **Only the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute was kept outside the scope of this Act because it was already under litigation.**

8. No-Confidence Motion Notice Against Rajya Sabha Chairman

- **In the Winter Session of the 18th Lok Sabha in December 2024, opposition MPs filed a notice for a No-Confidence Motion against the Rajya Sabha Chairman, Jagdeep Dhankhar, with the Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha.**
- **Historical Significance:** This is the **first action of its kind in India's parliamentary history.**
- **Allegations:** Opposition members submitted a six-point chargesheet, alleging that Dhankhar has conducted house proceedings in an extremely partisan manner since taking office in August 2022.
- **Procedural Reality:** Due to the short duration of the Winter Session and the numbers in the Rajya Sabha, the resolution is unlikely to be passed. Furthermore, notices expire upon the prorogation of the session.

8.1 Constitutional Basis:

- MPs used **Article 67** of the Indian Constitution.
- **Article 67(b):** A Vice-President may be removed from office by a resolution of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) passed by a majority of all the then members and agreed to by the House of the People (Lok Sabha).
- **Requirement:** **At least 14 days' notice must be given** before moving such a resolution.

9. Demand for Review of Dowry and Domestic Violence Laws

- **Following the suicide of Bengaluru-based AI engineer Atul Subhash in December 2024 (who alleged harassment by his wife and in-laws), a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed in the Supreme Court seeking intervention to review and reform dowry and domestic violence laws.**
- **Misuse:** The petition claims that the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and Section 498A of the IPC (now under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita) are being misused.

- **Gender Neutrality:** The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 does not recognize men and transgender persons as potential victims of domestic abuse. Men facing harassment from partners have no legal protection under this Act.
- **Custody and Divorce:** In child custody disputes, courts often prefer mothers as primary caregivers, sometimes ignoring the close bond of the father.
- **Adoption:** Under the POCSO Act 2012 (and related adoption guidelines), a single woman can adopt a child of any gender, but a single man cannot adopt a girl child.

10. Hemant Soren Sworn in as Jharkhand CM for the Fourth Time

- **JMM leader Hemant Soren took the oath of office as the Chief Minister of Jharkhand for the fourth time on November 28, 2024.**

11. Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill Passed in Lok Sabha

- **The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed in the Lok Sabha by voice vote.**

11.1 Key Features:

- **Nominations:** Allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees instead of one. These can be appointed simultaneously or successively. (For lockers, it remains successive only).
- **Substantial Interest:** The threshold for "substantial interest" for directorships is proposed to increase from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore.
- **Director Tenure:** Increases the tenure of directors in cooperative banks from eight years to ten years, aligning with the 2011 Constitutional Act.
- **Dual Directorship:** Allows directors of Central Cooperative Banks to also serve on the boards of State Cooperative Banks.
- **Auditor Remuneration:** Banks will have the flexibility to decide the remuneration of statutory auditors, which was previously controlled by the RBI and the Central Government.

12. Ban on 'ULFA' under UAPA

- **The Ministry of Home Affairs extended the ban on the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) for another five years under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967.**
- **Context:** ULFA is an armed militant organization in Assam aiming to separate Assam from India. It was founded in 1979.
- **History:** First banned in 1990; the ban has been periodically renewed since then.
- **Legal Power:** Section 35 of UAPA empowers the government to declare an organization as unlawful or an individual as a terrorist if involved in activities promoting secessionism.

13. First Constitution Day Celebration in J&K Since 1950

- **For the first time since the Constitution of India came into force in 1950, Jammu and Kashmir celebrated Constitution Day on November 26, 2024. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha led the historic celebrations.**

14. 'Sarai Kale Khan Chowk' Renamed 'Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk'

- **A dispute arose between the Delhi Government and the Central Government over renaming Sarai Kale Khan Chowk in Delhi to Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk.**
- **Announcement:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced the name change on the 150th birth anniversary of tribal icon Bhagwan Birsa Munda.
- **Controversy:** The AAP-led Delhi government raised concerns over the process, questioning the validity of the renaming as the name "Sarai Kale Khan Chowk" was reportedly not officially recognized in government records, and highlighted the need for a Road Naming Authority.

International

1. 19th G20 Summit 2024

- **The 19th G20 Summit 2024 (Summit Rio 2024) was held on November 18-19, 2024, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.**
- Prime Minister Modi attended the summit on behalf of India.
- Summit Theme: Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet.
- This was the first G20 Summit to be hosted by Brazil.
- For the first time at the Rio Summit, the African Union participated as a full member.
- The 20th G20 Summit will be held in South Africa at the end of 2025.

1.1 Key Highlights of the Summit:

- Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty:
- A new global alliance was launched during the G20 Summit in Brazil to eradicate poverty and hunger at the global level.
- This is a voluntary alliance of governments, international organizations, NGOs, and other stakeholders working to support SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and other interrelated Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Primary Objective:** To eliminate hunger and poverty worldwide by 2030.
- **Technical Headquarters:** Based at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome, Italy.
- **Inclusion of SDG 18 on Racial Equality:** The summit supported the inclusion of a new SDG 18, which focuses specifically on Racial Equality.

1.2 G-20 (Group of 20):

- Established in **1999** following the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s.
- It began as an informal forum for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the most important industrial and developing economies to discuss international economic and financial stability.
- In the wake of the 2007 global financial crisis, the G20 was upgraded to include Heads of State/Government level summits.
- First Summit of Heads of Government: 2008 in Washington, D.C. (USA).
- The group aims to secure global economic stability by including middle-income countries.
- Together, G20 members represent 66% of the world's population, 85% of global GDP, and 75% of global trade.
- Members (19 countries and 2 groups): Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom, United States, the European Union, and the African Union.
- Spain is invited as a permanent guest.
- The G20 has no permanent secretariat or staff. Instead, the presidency rotates annually among members.

Year	Edition	Host Country	Key Highlights
2023	18th	India	Inclusion of the African Union
2024	19th	Brazil	Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty
2025	20th	South Africa	First summit in Africa
2026	21st	USA	Planned in Miami, Florida

2. ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'ICA Global Cooperative Conference 2024' and the 'UN International Year of Cooperatives 2025' at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.**
- The conference is organized by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA).
- For the first time in the 130-year history of the ICA, India hosted the Global Cooperative Conference.
- This conference provides a platform for leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders to solve problems, share best practices, and formulate strategies for the progress of the cooperative movement.
- Conference Theme: "Cooperatives Build Prosperity for All"
- **Participating Organizations:** The Indian hosting was led by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) in collaboration with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), AMUL, KRIBHCO (National level cooperatives), and the Government of India.

2.1 2025 - UN International Year of Cooperatives:

- PM Modi unveiled the theme for the '2025 UN International Year of Cooperatives'.
- **Theme:** "Cooperatives Build a Better World."
- **Commemorative Stamp:** PM Modi released a commemorative postal stamp featuring a Lotus. The five petals of the lotus represent the five elements of nature (**Panchtattva: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space**) and highlight the commitment of cooperatives to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

3. India Ranks 49th in Network Readiness Index 2024

- **According to the 'Network Readiness Index 2024' (NRI) released in November 2024, India jumped 11 places to rank 49th out of 133 countries. In 2023, India was ranked 60th.**
- India's score improved from 49.93 in 2023 to 53.63 in 2024. This reflects significant progress in India's digital infrastructure and capabilities.
- The index, published by the Portulans Institute, evaluates 133 economies using 54 indicators across four key pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact.

3.1 India's Global Rankings in Key Areas:

- **1st Globally:** AI scientific publications, AI talent concentration, and ICT services exports.
- **2nd Globally:** Fiber to the Premises (FTTH) internet subscriptions, mobile broadband traffic, and international internet bandwidth.
- **3rd Globally:** Domestic market scale.
- **4th Globally:** Annual telecommunication investment.

3.2 Top Countries in the Index:

1. United States of America
2. Singapore
3. Finland

4. India to Chair the 68th Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs

- **India has secured the Chairmanship of the 68th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) for the first time.**
- The 68th session will be held from March 10–14, 2025, at the Vienna International Centre (VIC), Austria.
- About the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND):
- It is the central drug policy-making body within the United Nations system.
- Established in 1946 by a resolution of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- It is responsible for monitoring global drug trends, supporting member states in creating balanced drug control policies, and overseeing the implementation of three major international drug treaties (1961, 1971, and 1988).
- Organizational Structure: It acts as a functional commission of ECOSOC and serves as the governing body of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) based in Vienna.
- Membership: It consists of 53 member states elected by ECOSOC. The commission is guided by a Bureau representing various regional groups (Asia, Africa, Latin America, etc.).

5. Global Soil Conference (GSC) 2024

- **The Global Soil Conference 2024 was held in New Delhi**
- **Theme:** "Caring Soils Beyond Food Security: Climate change mitigation & Ecosystem Services."
- Organized by the Indian Society of Soil Science (ISSS) in collaboration with the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS).
- **Objective:** To address challenges in sustainable soil/resource management and highlight the importance of soil health for food security, climate change mitigation, and ecosystem services.

6. India: Fastest-Growing G20 Economy

- **According to rankings unveiled during the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, India has emerged as the fastest-growing economy among G20 nations.**
- India's GDP growth forecast for 2024 stands at 7%.

6.1 Comparative Growth Forecasts:

Country/Region	GDP Growth Forecast (%)
• India	7.0%
• Indonesia	5.0%
• China	4.8%
• Russia	3.6%
• Brazil	3.0%
• African Region	3.0%
• USA	2.8%
• Canada	1.3%
• Australia	1.2%
• France/EU/UK	1.1%
• Italy	0.7%
• Japan	0.3%
• Germany	0.0%

7. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah: Namibia's First Female President

- **Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah (72), popularly known as NNN, was elected as the first female President of Namibia after securing 57% of the vote in the November-December 2024 elections.**
- Her victory solidifies the 34-year rule of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) party, which has been in power since independence from South Africa in 1990.
- She previously served as the country's Vice President and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation under President Hage Geingob, who passed away in February 2024.

8. World Maritime Technology Conference (WMTTC) 2024: Chennai

- **The 2024 edition of the World Maritime Technology Conference (WMTTC) was held in Chennai (Tamil Nadu)**
- This prestigious conference returned to India after a long gap of 15 years.
- The event was organized by the Chennai branch of the Institute of Marine Engineers (India).
- The World Maritime Technology Conference (WMTTC) is a premier global event held every three years under the auspices of the World Maritime Technology Congress.
- The conference focuses on innovations in marine engineering, sustainable shipping practices, and the future of maritime technology.

9. 2nd India-CARICOM Summit

- **The Second India-CARICOM Summit was held in Georgetown, Guyana.**
- **Chairmanship:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Grenada (and current Chair of CARICOM), Dickon Mitchell, co-chaired the summit.
- **History:** The first India-CARICOM Summit was held in New York in 2019.

9.1 About Caribbean Community (CARICOM):

- It is a group of 21 countries, consisting of 15 Member States and 6 Associate Members.
- **Establishment:** Founded in 1973 by four founding members (Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago) by signing the Treaty of Chaguaramas. It was later revised in 2002 to establish a single market and economy.
- **Secretariat:** Georgetown, Guyana.
- **Demographics:** Home to approximately 16 million citizens; 60% are under the age of 30. Major ethnic groups include African, Indian, European, Chinese, Portuguese, and Javanese.
- **Geography:** Most members are island nations in the Caribbean Sea (Atlantic Ocean), except for Belize (Central America) and Guyana and Suriname (South America).
- **Four Main Pillars:** Economic Integration; Foreign Policy Coordination; Human and Social Development; and Security.



10. Regime Change in Syria

- Following an armed rebellion in Syria, President Bashar al-Assad fled the country to Russia. This brought an end to the 50-year dictatorship of the Assad family.
- New Leadership: Syrian rebels, led by the Islamist militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), have taken control of Syria.

11. Switzerland Suspends India's MFN Status

- Switzerland decided to cancel its unilateral implementation of the Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) clause within the Double Tax Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with India.
- **Impact:** Starting January 1, 2025, Switzerland will apply the previous 10% withholding tax rate on Indian entities.

11.1 Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) Status:

- A status given by one nation to another to ensure non-discriminatory trade between them.
- It does not mean "preferential treatment," but rather a guarantee that the recipient nation will not be at a disadvantage compared to the granting nation's other trading partners.
- It is a core principle of World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.

12. Romania and Bulgaria Join the Schengen Zone

- Bulgaria and Romania will join the European Union's (EU) Schengen Zone.
- **Significance:** Joining this borderless area will allow citizens of these two nations (which have been EU members since 2007) to travel and move seamlessly across Europe.



12.1 About the Schengen Zone:

- Named after the small village of 'Schengen' in Luxembourg, where the Schengen Agreement (1985) and Convention (1990) were signed.
- **Function:** It abolished internal border checks between participating countries.
- **Members:** Currently includes 29 countries (25 EU members and 4 non-EU nations: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland).
- **Note:** Cyprus and Ireland are the only EU members not in the zone.



13. India Re-elected to the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

- India was re-elected to the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for the 2025-2026 term.
- **Context:** This highlights India's significant role in international peace efforts.
- **About PBC:** Established in December 2005, it is an intergovernmental advisory body that supports peace initiatives in conflict-affected regions.

14. Indian-American Kash Patel to be New FBI Director

- U.S. President-elect Donald Trump nominated his close confidant Kashyap 'Kash' Patel as the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- Significance: He will be one of the highest-ranking Indian-Americans in the incoming administration.
- Process: The nomination requires Senate confirmation to be finalized.

15. 4th Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

- Held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- The Jeddah Commitments: The conference concluded with the adoption of the "Jeddah Commitments," which set practical, actionable steps for stakeholders to meet AMR-related targets by 2030.

16. Indian Students Top U.S. Academic Enrollments

- For the first time in 15 years, Indian students comprise the largest portion of international students in the U.S. at 29.4%.

- Numbers: India has surpassed China, with 277,398 Indian students currently studying in the U.S.
- Graduate Level: Indians lead in Master's and PhD enrollments for the second consecutive year, with a 19% increase (196,567 students).
- Funding: Primary funding sources include personal/family funds (54.5%), current employment (21.8%), and U.S. university funding (19%).

17. Valdecy Urquiza is the New Secretary General of INTERPOL

- **During the 92nd INTERPOL General Assembly held in Glasgow, Scotland (2024), Valdecy Urquiza of Brazil was elected as the new Secretary General.**
- **Succession:** He replaces Jürgen Stock, who held the position for 10 years.
- **India's Presence:** CBI Director Praveen Sood represented India at the conference.
- **About INTERPOL:** Founded in 1923, headquartered in Lyon, France, with 196 member countries.



18. New Constitution Approved in Gabon via Historic Referendum

- **92% of voters in Gabon approved a new constitution through a historic referendum.**
- **Goal:** To end the 55-year Bongo dynasty and restore democratic civilian government.
- **Context:** General Brice Oligui Nguema took power in a military coup in August 2023. While the junta organized the referendum to signal a new era, critics argue the constitution is designed to allow Nguema to remain in power.



19. Iraq's First National Census in 40 Years

- **Iraq launched its first nationwide census in four decades to modernize data collection and planning. The last full census was in 1987.**

20. Armenia Becomes 104th Full Member of International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- **About ISA:** Founded by India and France in 2015 (HQ: Gurugram, Haryana) to promote solar energy.
- **Goals:** Mobilize \$1,000 billion in investment, provide energy to 1,000 million people, and install 1,000 GW of solar capacity by 2030.

21. International Gita Mahotsav 2024

- **Celebrated in Kurukshetra, Haryana to commemorate the birth of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. It has been celebrated as an international event by the Haryana government since 2016.**

22. Harmeet Dhillon Selected as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights

- **Donald Trump nominated the prominent Indian-American lawyer Harmeet Kaur Dhillon for the position of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the Department of Justice.**

23. François Bayrou: New Prime Minister of France

- **President Emmanuel Macron appointed François Bayrou as the new Prime Minister. He is the third Prime Minister of France in 2024, following the collapse of Michel Barnier's minority government via a no-confidence motion.**

Maharashtra

1. Devendra Fadnavis Appointed Chief Minister for the Third Time

- **After the Mahayuti alliance claimed power with an unprecedented majority in the Assembly elections, Devendra Fadnavis has once again taken office as the Chief Minister. He is the 18th person to hold the post of Chief Minister of Maharashtra.**
- Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office to Fadnavis as Chief Minister, and to Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar as Deputy Chief Ministers.
- The swearing-in ceremony took place at Azad Maidan, Mumbai, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- This is Devendra Fadnavis's third term as Chief Minister. Notably, Ajit Pawar took the oath as Deputy CM for the sixth time, and Eknath Shinde became only the second person in the state's history to serve as Deputy CM after having served as Chief Minister.
- Devendra Fadnavis has now recorded the feat of becoming Chief Minister three times, following in the footsteps of Sharad Pawar.
- **Profile:** Devendra Sarita Gangadharrao Fadnavis
- **Birth:** July 22, 1970, in Nagpur. His father, Gangadhar Fadnavis, was a member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council from Nagpur.
- **Education:** Law degree from Nagpur University's Government Law College; Postgraduate degree in Business Management; Diploma in Methods & Techniques of Project Management from DSE-German Foundation for International Development, Berlin.

1.1 Political Journey:

- Active member of ABVP (RSS affiliate).
- **1992-2001:** Two-time member of Nagpur Municipal Corporation.
- Mayor of Nagpur: Served two terms (became the second youngest Mayor in India at age 27 and the youngest in Nagpur's history).
- **Legislator:** 6-time consecutive MLA since 1999 (Nagpur West 1999-2009; Nagpur South-West 2009-present).
- Chief Minister Terms: Oct 2014 - Nov 2019; Nov 23-26, 2019; Dec 5, 2024 - Present.
- **Records:** Second CM after Vasant Rao Naik to complete a full 5-year term; youngest CM after Sharad Pawar; shortest tenure as CM (80 hours in Nov 2019); only person to return as CM after serving as Deputy CM.
- **Awards:** Best Parliamentarian Award (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association); Honorary Doctorates from Osaka City University and Koyasan University (Japan); Outstanding Leadership Development Award (Georgetown University, USA); 'Nagbhushan' Award.

1.2 Chief Ministers of Maharashtra: Key Facts

- **Appointment:** Under Article 164 of the Constitution, the Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor.
- **Tenure:** Not fixed; they hold office during the "pleasure of the Governor" (as long as they enjoy a majority in the Assembly).
- **Eligibility:** Must be a member of either the Legislative Assembly or the Council. If not a member at the time of appointment, they must become one within 6 months.

1.3 List of Key Chief Ministers

No.	Name	Tenure	Political Party	Special Note
1	Yashwantrao Chavan	1960 - 1962	Congress	1st CM (Architect of modern Maharashtra)
2	Vasant Rao Naik	1963 - 1975	Congress	Longest tenure (11 years, 78 days)
3	Sharad Pawar	1978 - 1980	PDL	Youngest CM (at age 38)
4	A. R. Antulay	1980 - 1982	Congress	1st Muslim CM of the state
5	Manohar Joshi	1995 - 1999	Shiv Sena	1st CM of the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance
7	Devendra Fadnavis	2014 - 2019	BJP	2nd CM to complete a full 5-year term
10	Devendra Fadnavis	2024 - Present	BJP	Appointed CM for the 3rd time

- **Most times CM:** Sharad Pawar (4 times).
- **Shortest tenure:** Devendra Fadnavis (80-hour government in Nov 2019).
- **President's Rule:** Applied 3 times in Maharashtra (1980, 2014, and 2019).
- **Resignation:** Submitted to the Governor. The resignation of the CM implies the resignation of the entire Council of Ministers.

2. India's First Seabed Cleanup Drive in Malvan

- **India's first-ever seabed cleanup drive was successfully conducted in Malvan to preserve the marine ecosystem.**
- The campaign was organized by the NGO Vanashakti in collaboration with the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), the Fishery Survey of India (FSI), Mumbai, the Neelkranti Organization, and Youth Beat for Environment.
- Conducted in the coastal waters of Sindhudurg, the drive resulted in the removal of over 250 kg of non-biodegradable waste from the ocean floor.



3. 'Vatsalya' Scheme for Maternal and Child Health Wins National 'SKOCH' Award

- **The Public Health Department of Maharashtra was honored with the prestigious national 'SKOCH' (SKOCH) award.**
- The award recognizes the state's outstanding performance in the 'Vatsalya' scheme, which focuses on improving the health of mothers (pre-conception) and children up to two years of age.
- Significant achievements in laboratory services and maternal-child health interventions were the primary reasons for this national recognition.

4. Maharashtra Ranks Third in Organic Production

- **Maharashtra has secured the third position in India regarding the number of organic food processing centers.**
- Karnataka leads the country with 127 processing centers.
- Gujarat ranks second with 122 centers, followed by Maharashtra with 113.
- The rankings for top states are as follows:

Rank	State	Number of Processing Centers
1	Karnataka	127
2	Gujarat	122
3	Maharashtra	113
4	Tamil Nadu	88
5	West Bengal	83

5. First Cabinet Expansion

- **The first expansion of the Council of Ministers took place. This was the first-ever cabinet expansion held at the Legislature in Nagpur. A total of 39 ministers took the oath. Out of these 39, 33 MLAs were sworn in as Cabinet Ministers, and 6 MLAs were sworn in as Ministers of State.**
- **Party Breakdown:** The cabinet includes 19 MLAs from the BJP, 11 from the Shiv Sena, and 9 from the NCP.
- **Gender Representation:** The cabinet includes four women MLAs.

5.1 Portfolio Allocation in Maharashtra Government:

5.1.1 Cabinet Ministers:

- **Devendra Fadnavis:** Home, Energy (excluding Non-Conventional Energy), Law and Judiciary, General Administration Department, Information and Public Relations, and subjects not allocated to any other minister.
- **Eknath Shinde:** Urban Development, Housing, Public Works (Public Undertakings).

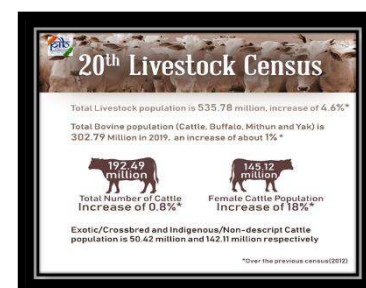
- Ajit Pawar: Finance and Planning, State Excise.
- Chandrashekhar Bawankule: Revenue.
- Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil: Water Resources (Godavari and Krishna Basins).
- Hasan Mushrif: Medical Education.
- Chandrakant Patil: Higher and Technical Education, Parliamentary Affairs.
- Girish Mahajan: Water Resources (Vidarbha, Tapi, and Konkan).
- Gulabrao Patil: Water Supply and Sanitation.
- Ganesh Naik: Minister of Forests.
- Dadaji Bhuse: School Education.
- Sanjay Rathod: Water and Soil Conservation.
- Dhananjay Munde: Food and Civil Supplies, Consumer Protection.
- Mangalprabhat Lodha: Skill Development and Employment.
- Uday Samant: Industries and Marathi Language.
- Jaykumar Rawal: Marketing and Protocol.
- Pankaja Munde: Environment and Animal Husbandry.
- Atul Save: OBC Welfare, Dairy Development, and Non-Conventional Energy.
- Ashok Uike: Tribal Development.
- Shambhuraj Desai: Tourism, Mining, and Ex-Servicemen Welfare.
- Adv. Ashish Shelar: Information Technology and Cultural Affairs.
- Dattatray Bharane: Sports and Youth Welfare, Minority Development and Aukaf.
- Aditi Tatkare: Women and Child Development.
- Shivendrasinh Bhosale: Public Works.
- Adv. Manikrao Kokate: Agriculture.
- Jaykumar Gore: Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.
- Narhari Zirwal: Food and Drug Administration.
- Sanjay Savkare: Textiles.
- Sanjay Shirsat: Social Justice.
- Pratap Sarnaik: Transport.
- Bharatshet Gogawale: Employment Guarantee, Horticulture, and Saltpan Land Development.
- Makarand Jadhav Patil: Relief and Rehabilitation.
- Nitesh Rane: Fisheries and Ports.
- Akash Phundkar: Labour.
- Babasaheb Patil: Cooperation.
- Prakash Abitkar: Public Health and Family Welfare.

5.1.2 Ministers of State:

- Madhuri Misal: Urban Development, Transport, Social Justice, Medical Education, Minority Development, and Aukaf.
- Ashish Jaiswal: Finance, Planning, Agriculture, Relief and Rehabilitation, Law and Judiciary, Labour.
- Pankaj Bhojar: Home (Rural), Housing, School Education, Cooperation, Mining.
- Meghna Bordikar-Sakore: Public Health, Family Welfare, Water Supply, Energy, Women and Child Development, Public Works.
- Indranil Naik: Industries, Public Works, Higher and Technical Education, Tribal Development, Tourism, Soil and Water Conservation.
- Yogesh Kadam: Home (Urban), Revenue, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Food and Civil Supplies, Consumer Protection, Food and Drug Administration.

6. Livestock Census Commences Across the State

- **The 21st Livestock Census in the state began, The census is being conducted using a mobile app.**
- **Details:** It will record the breeds and sub-breeds of animals.
- **Rankings:** Maharashtra is a livestock-rich state, ranking 7th in the country in livestock and 5th in poultry population.
- **History:** Livestock censuses have been held every five years in India since 1919.
- **20th Census (2019):** For the first time, data was collected based on species and rural/urban areas.



- **Statistics:** According to the 20th Census, Maharashtra had a total of 3,30,80,000 (3.30 crore) livestock, a 1.83% increase from the previous census, though the population of indigenous cattle had declined.

7. Kalidas Kolambkar as Pro-tem Speaker for Special Session

- **A three-day special session of the Legislative Assembly was organized.**
- **Pro-tem Speaker:** Assembly member Kalidas Sulochana Nilkanth Kolambkar was selected as the Pro-tem Speaker for this special session.
- **Role:** He administered the oath of office and secrecy to the newly elected members.

8. Adv. Rahul Narwekar Unanimously Elected as Assembly Speaker

- **During the special session of the Legislature, Assembly member Adv. Rahul Narwekar was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the 15th Legislative Assembly.**

9. Shivaji Maharaj Statue Work Awarded to Ram Sutar's Company

- **Following the collapse of the 35-foot statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort in Malvan (Sindhudurg district) on August 26, 2024 (which had been unveiled by PM Modi), the state government has planned a new statue.**
- **Project:** A 60-foot statue will be erected at the site.
- **Contractor:** The work has been awarded to Ram Sutar Art Creations Pvt. Ltd., the company of veteran sculptor Ram Sutar.
- **Conditions:** The tender mandates that the statue must last at least 100 years. The contractor must also provide maintenance and repair for 10 years.
- **Background:** This company previously constructed the 'Statue of Unity' (Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel) in Gujarat.

Economy

1. Sanjay Malhotra: New Governor of RBI

- **The Central Government has appointed Sanjay Malhotra (56) as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).**
- He succeeds the previous Governor, Shaktikanta Das.
- He is the 26th Governor of the RBI.
- Prior to this appointment, he served as the Secretary of the Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance.
- **About Sanjay Malhotra:**
- He is a 1990-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre.
- **Education:** Engineering degree in Computer Science from IIT Kanpur and a Master's degree in Public Policy from Princeton University, USA.
- **Career Highlights:** Served as District Collector in Chittorgarh (1996-98); Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Power (2020-21); and Chairman & MD of Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) Limited. He also served as a Government Nominee Director on the RBI Central Board in 2022.



1.1 RBI Governor: Key Facts

- **Role:** The RBI is India's central bank, and its highest-ranking official is the 'Governor'.
- **Appointment:** Appointed by the Central Government as per the RBI Act, 1934. The names are suggested by the Financial Sector Regulatory Appointment Search Committee (FSRASC) headed by the Cabinet Secretary.
- **Tenure:** Generally 3 years, though it can be extended.
- **Signature:** The Governor signs all currency notes of ₹2 and above. (Note: The ₹1 note is signed by the Union Finance Secretary).
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.

1.2 Notable RBI Governors

No.	Name	Tenure	Special Information
1	Sir Osborne Smith	1935 - 1937	First Governor (Australian banker)
2	C. D. Deshmukh	1943 - 1949	First Indian Governor; Nationalization occurred in his term

3	Benegal Rama Rau	1949 - 1957	Longest-serving Governor (7 years, 197 days)
4	Manmohan Singh	1982 - 1985	15th Governor who later became the Prime Minister
5	Amitabh Ghosh	1985	Shortest tenure (only 20 days)
6	Shaktikanta Das	2018 - 2024	25th Governor; led through the COVID-19 pandemic
7	Sanjay Malhotra	2024 - Present	26th and current Governor

1.3 Powers and Functions:

- **Monetary Policy:** Ex-officio Chairman of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). Decides Repo Rates and controls inflation.
- **Banker's Bank:** Regulates and licenses commercial banks.
- **Forex Management:** Custodian and manager of India's Foreign Exchange Reserves.

2. India's 10-Year Coffee Growth Plan

- The Coffee Board of India launched a 10-year roadmap to double coffee production and exports by 2034.

2.1 Highlights:

- Establishing 100 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).
- Identifying 10,000 small farmers to grow coffee specifically for export.
- Setting up 10,000 coffee kiosks managed by women entrepreneurs to increase domestic per capita consumption from 107g to 250g.
- Target to increase production from 3.7 lakh tons (2024-25) to 9 lakh tons by 2047.
- **Context:** India produces Arabica and Robusta varieties; Karnataka is the largest producer. India became the 8th largest producer in 2022-23.



3. 'Jalvahak' Scheme

- Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal unveiled the 'Jalvahak' Scheme in December 2024 for cargo promotion.
- **Objective:** Reduce logistics costs and decongest road/rail networks by leveraging inland waterways.
- Focuses on long-distance transport via NW 1 (Ganges), NW 2 (Brahmaputra), and NW 16 (Barak).
- **Incentive:** Provides reimbursement of up to 35% of operating costs for freight moved via the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route.
- **Target:** To increase waterway cargo from 132.89 million tons (2023-24) to 500 million tons by 2047.

4. National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)

- **Approved on November 25, 2024, as a standalone Central Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture.**
- **Budget:** ₹2,481 crore till 2025-26 (Center: ₹1,584 cr; State: ₹897 cr).
- **Objective:** Promote natural farming (including Zero Budget Natural Farming - ZBNF) in mission mode.
- **Scale:** Aims to reach 1 crore farmers and cover 7.5 lakh hectares over the next two years.
- **Support:** 10,000 Bio-input Resource Centers (BRCs) will provide ready-to-use inputs like Jeevamrut and Beejamrut. 30,000 Krishi Sakhis will assist in training.

5. India's Cumulative FDI Inflow Exceeds \$1 Trillion

- **Between April 2000 and September 2024, the total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow into India surpassed the \$1 trillion mark (\$1,033.40 billion).**
- This includes equity, reinvested earnings, and other capital.

5.1 Top Source Countries:

- Mauritius (25% - \$177.18 billion)
- Singapore (24% - \$167.47 billion)

- USA (10% - \$67.8 billion)
- Others include Netherlands (7%), Japan (6%), UK (5%), and UAE (3%).
- The sectors attracting the most investment include Service Sector, Computer Software and Hardware, Telecommunications, Trading, Construction Development, Automobile, Chemicals, and Pharmaceuticals.
- According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India has attracted a cumulative FDI of \$667.4 billion since 2014 (2014–24), recording a 119% increase over the previous decade (2004–14).
- In the manufacturing sector, FDI reached \$165.1 billion in the last decade (2014–24), a 69% growth compared to the \$97.7 billion recorded between 2004–14.

6. Bhu-Neer Portal

- **The Ministry of Jal Shakti unveiled the Bhu-Neer Portal during the 8th India Water Week-2024 (held Sept 17–20, 2024). This is a significant initiative aimed at enhancing groundwater regulation in India.**
- Developed by the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- **Objective:** To improve transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in groundwater usage and to simplify "Ease of Doing Business" through a centralized compliance database.

7. PM-WANI

- **The PM-WANI (Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) initiative has successfully established 246,993 hotspots across the country, becoming a pillar of the Digital India Mission.**
- Launched by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in 2020, it aims to expand public Wi-Fi access, especially in rural areas, by allowing local businesses (like shopkeepers) to set up hotspots.

8. Paryatan Mitra and Paryatan Didi Initiative

- **The Ministry of Tourism highlighted this national responsible tourism initiative in the Lok Sabha. It was originally launched in September 2024.**
- **Objective:** To train local stakeholders to become tourist-friendly "ambassadors" and storytellers.
- **Focus:** Training women and youth to create innovative products like heritage walks, food tours, and nature treks.
- **Pilot Sites:** Initially implemented at 6 sites: Orchha (MP), Gandikota (AP), Bodh Gaya (Bihar), Aizawl (Mizoram), Jodhpur (Rajasthan), and Sri Vijaya Puram (Andaman & Nicobar). It has since been expanded to 50 tourist destinations.

9. Vima Sakhi Scheme

- **PM Modi launched LIC's 'Vima Sakhi Scheme', Aimed at women empowerment and financial inclusion by providing jobs to 2 lakh women.**
- This is a stipend-based program offering specialized training and financial support for three years.
- **Eligibility:** Women aged 18 to 70 who have completed Class 10.
- **Stipend Structure:** Monthly stipend of ₹7,000 (1st year), ₹6,000 (2nd year), and ₹5,000 (3rd year). Agents can also earn commissions on policies sold.

10. India's First Green Hydrogen Fueling Station in Leh

- **Amara Raja Infra completed the construction of India's first green hydrogen fueling station for NTPC Limited in Leh, Ladakh. This project enables emission-free transport in the high-altitude region.**

11. Trial of India's First Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge Completed

- **The 'New Pamban Bridge', India's first vertical lift railway sea bridge, is ready to replace the 105-year-old Pamban Bridge, connecting mainland India to Rameswaram.**
- A trial run was successfully conducted with trains running at 80 km/h.
- Built by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) at a cost of ₹535 crore, the 2.05 km bridge features a fully automated vertical lift span providing 22 meters of air clearance for passing ships.

12. India's First 'Uber Shikara' Service Launched in Srinagar

- **Uber launched Asia's first water transport service, 'Uber Shikara', at the scenic Dal Lake in Srinagar, J&K.**
- This allows tourists to book traditional Shikara rides seamlessly through a modern app-based platform.



13. Mission Arun Himveer

- **The Arunachal Pradesh government launched Mission Arun Himveer to enhance market links for local farmers.**
- The Arunachal Pradesh Agriculture Marketing Board (APAMB) signed an MoU with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).
- **Outcome:** Local produce (fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry) from farmers and SHGs will be supplied directly to ITBP personnel stationed in the border areas.

14. Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics (BAHS) 2024

- **On the occasion of National Milk Day (November 26, 2024), the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying released the Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2024.**
- **Data Source:** Based on the results of the Integrated Sample Survey (ISS) conducted between March 2023 and February 2024.
- **About ISS:** An annual survey covering 15% of villages across India to estimate production data for milk, meat, wool, and eggs.

14.1 Key Highlights of BAHS 2024:

- **Milk Production:**
 - Total production: 239.30 million tonnes (3.78% growth over 2022-23).
 - India is the world's largest milk producer.
 - Top 3 Producers: 1) Uttar Pradesh, 2) Rajasthan, 3) Madhya Pradesh.
- Per capita availability: Increased from 459g/day to 471g/day.
- **Egg Production:**
 - Total production: 142.77 billion eggs (3.18% growth).
 - India ranks 2nd globally in egg production.
 - Top 3 Producers: 1) Andhra Pradesh, 2) Tamil Nadu, 3) Telangana.
- **Meat Production:**
 - Total production: 10.25 million tonnes (4.95% growth).
 - Top 3 Producers: 1) West Bengal, 2) Uttar Pradesh, 3) Maharashtra.
- **Wool Production:**
 - Total production: 33.69 million kg (0.22% growth).
 - Top 3 Producers: 1) Rajasthan, 2) Jammu & Kashmir, 3) Gujarat.
- **Sector Growth:** The sector grew at a CAGR of 7.38% (at constant prices) from 2014-15 to 2022-23. Its share in Agricultural GVA rose from 24.32% to 30.38%.

15. Scheme for Development of 40 Tourist Destinations in 23 States

- **The Central Government approved ₹3,295 crore in interest-free loans to states for developing tourism infrastructure. 40 new projects across 23 states have been identified.**

- **Focus:** Developing lesser-known sites like Bateshwar (UP), Ponda (Goa), Gandikota (Andhra Pradesh), and Porbandar (Gujarat).

15.1 SASCI Scheme:

- Originally launched in 2020-21 as the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure.
- Renamed to SASCI (Investment) in 2022-23.
- Provides 50-year interest-free loans.
- **Components:** Focuses on vehicle scrappage, urban planning, police housing, Unity Malls, and digital libraries at panchayat levels.

16. Bharatiya Vayuyan (Indian Aviation) Bill 2024

- **Parliament passed the Bharatiya Vayuyan Bill 2024 (BVV). It replaces the Aircraft Act, 1934 (last amended in 2020) to bring major reforms to the aviation sector.**

17. Increase in Agricultural Employment

- **Between 2017-18 and 2023-24, the number of Indians working in agriculture increased significantly by 68 million, reversing the previous trend of declining agricultural employment.**

17.1 Factors:

- **COVID-19 Impact:** Lockdown caused urban informal workers to return to family farms.
- **Lack of Alternatives:** Agriculture remains a "fallback option" due to a lack of non-agricultural jobs.
- **Gender Shift:** The increase is largely driven by women (66.6 million out of the 68 million).
- **Regional Concentration:** Growth is highest in economically weaker states like UP, Bihar, and MP.

18. Small Finance Banks (SFBs) Allowed to Provide UPI-Based Loans

- **The RBI allowed Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to offer pre-approved credit (loans) through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).**
- **Objective:** To enhance financial inclusion, especially for "New to Credit" customers.
- **About SFBs:**
 - Regulated under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
 - Established based on the Nachiket Mor Committee recommendations.
 - **Requirements:** Must allocate 75% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to Priority Sector Lending (PSL). 25% of branches must be in unbanked rural areas. Minimum capital: ₹200 crore.

19. Justice Nawab Singh Committee Report on Agricultural Crisis

- **A Supreme Court-appointed committee headed by Justice Nawab Singh (former judge of Punjab & Haryana High Court) submitted its interim report on the agrarian crisis.**
- **Key Findings:**
 - **Income Crisis:** Farmers earn only ₹27 per day from actual agricultural activities. Average monthly household income is ₹10,218.
 - **Rising Debt:** Institutional debt in Punjab (₹73,673 Cr) and Haryana (₹76,630 Cr) is massive. Non-institutional debt (money lenders) is also high (21.3% in Punjab, 32% in Haryana).
 - **Suicides:** Since 1995, over 4 lakh farmers/laborers have committed suicide in India.
 - **Stagnant Growth:** Agriculture growth in Punjab (2%) and Haryana (3.38%) is significantly below the national average.
 - **Disproportionate Contribution:** Agriculture employs 46% of the workforce but contributes only 15% to the National Income.

20. Europe's Digital Euro

- **The European Central Bank (ECB) introduced the Digital Euro as a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).**
- Like the Indian Digital Rupee (e₹) launched in 2022, it is a legal tender backed by the central bank, unlike private cryptocurrencies.

21. Sagarmanthan: The Great Ocean Dialogue

- **The first edition of this annual conference was held on November 18-19, 2024, in New Delhi.**

- Co-hosts: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF).

22. E-Daakhil Portal

- **Launched in Ladakh on making it operational in all states and UTs of India.**
- Purpose: Allows consumers to file complaints online under the Consumer Protection Act 2019. It is cheap, fast, and hassle-free.

23. 5G AI-RAN

- **Nvidia and SoftBank Corp announced the world's first integrated Artificial Intelligence (AI) and 5G telecom network, known as 5G AI-RAN.**
- It transforms traditional base stations into AI-driven computing centers, supporting autonomous vehicles and robotics.

24. India's First AI Data Bank

- **Inauguration: By Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh at the 7th 'ASSOCHAM AI Leadership Meet 2024' (New Delhi).**
- Objective: To boost innovative research and strengthen national security.
- What it is: A system providing high-quality 'datasets' to researchers and startups to train AI models.
- Key Features: Real-time analysis of satellite, drone, and IoT data.
- Important Facts (Exam Oriented):
 - Goal: India to be a global AI leader by 2047.
 - First AI Anganwadi: Waddhamna, Nagpur, Maharashtra (August 2025).
 - First AI Research Centre: Wadhvani AI, Mumbai.

25. India's First Self-Sustaining Gaushala in Gwalior

- **PM Modi inaugurated India's first modern, self-sustaining 'Adarsh Gaushala' in Laltipara, Gwalior (MP).**
- Feature: It houses a state-of-the-art Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plant that uses cow dung and organic waste to produce gas and organic fertilizer.

26. Sanraksha App

- **Launched by Indian Railways to enhance passenger safety and train employees using data analytics and AI.**
- Designer: IRTS officer Dilip Singh (2013 batch).
- Pilot: Successfully tested in the Nagpur Division.

PRAYAAS

Social Affairs

1. Reconsideration of the New Population Policy

- **The Andhra Pradesh government withdrew the Two-Child Policy that had been in place for nearly three decades.**
- Consequently, the ban on individuals with more than two children contesting local body elections has been lifted.
- **Historical Context:** In 1994, the Naidu government in undivided Andhra Pradesh amended the Panchayat Raj and Municipal Administration Acts to implement a Two-Child Policy. This was intended to control population growth by disqualifying those with more than two children from local governance roles.
- **Reasons for Reversal:** The state government argued that the state is facing challenges of an aging population and declining fertility rates, which could have severe long-term economic and social consequences.
- **Delimitation Concerns:** Southern leaders expressed fear that states which successfully implemented family planning would be unfairly penalized during the 2026 Delimitation process (redrawing of constituency boundaries based on population).
- Andhra Pradesh is not the first to withdraw this policy; Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh revoked similar policies in 2005.

1.1 Need for a New Population Policy in India?

- Declining Total Fertility Rate (TFR): India's TFR has steadily declined. According to NFHS-5 (2019-21), India's TFR is 2.0, which is below the replacement level of 2.1.

- Some states like Andhra Pradesh (TFR = 1.5) are well below this, sparking concerns about a shrinking workforce.
- Demographic Dividend: With approximately 68% of the population in the working-age group (15–64), India is one of the youngest nations. A new policy is needed to optimize education, skills, and employment.
- Aging Population: According to the UNFPA 'India Ageing Report 2023', 20% of India's population will be 60 or older by 2050, requiring specialized healthcare and social security policies.
- Resource Scarcity: Cities like Delhi and Bengaluru face severe water stress. Unplanned urbanization necessitates policies that balance population with infrastructure and environment.
- **Maharashtra Context:** Maharashtra is one of the few states that still implements a "Small Family" rule for government jobs. The Maharashtra Civil Services (Declaration of Small Family) Rules, 2005, mandates a declaration during job applications.

2. One Nation One Subscription (ONOS)

- **The Union Cabinet approved the 'One Nation One Subscription' scheme for three years.**
- Objective: To make scholarly research articles and journals available nationwide to students and researchers, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
- Coordination: It will be managed by INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network), an autonomous center under the UGC.
- Impact: Provides access to over 13,000 high-impact journals from 30 leading international publishers, benefiting approximately 1.8 crore students and faculty members.

3. Child Marriage Free India Campaign

- **Union Minister Annapurna Devi launched the 'Child Marriage Free India Campaign'.**
- This national initiative aligns with the global "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence" (Nov 25 – Dec 10).
- Key Features:
 - **Portal:** An online platform for citizens to report child marriage incidents and find Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs).
 - Target States: High-rate states like West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Tripura, Assam, and Andhra Pradesh.
 - Legal Framework: * PCMA 2006: Legal age is 21 for men and 18 for women.
 - POCSO Act: Applied in cases involving girls under 14.

4. SHE-Box Portal

- **Launched to enhance the implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.**
- **Features:** Designed for total confidentiality; only the Internal Committee (IC) or Local Committee (LC) chairs can access complainant details.
- **Process:** Complainants or representatives can file details online. The portal features a monitoring dashboard for tracking resolved and pending cases.

5. 'Ann Chakra' and 'SCAN' for PDS Reform

- **Minister Pralhad Joshi unveiled these portals to modernize the Public Distribution System (PDS).**
- Ann Chakra: * Developed with IIT-Delhi and the World Food Programme (WFP).
- Uses algorithms to optimize food transport routes, aiming to save ₹250 crore annually by reducing fuel and logistics costs.
- SCAN (Subsidy Claim Application for NFSA):
 - A single-window system for states to submit food subsidy claims under the NFSA 2013.
 - Ensures end-to-end automation and faster settlement of funds.

6. QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025

- **Released, evaluating universities on Environmental Impact, Social Impact, and Governance.**
- Indian Performance: 78 Indian universities were featured.
 - IIT Delhi: 1st in India (Global Rank: 171)
 - IIT Kharagpur: 2nd in India (Global Rank: 202)
 - IIT Bombay: 3rd in India (Global Rank: 234)

7. Nai Chetna 3.0

- **Launched as the third edition of the national campaign against gender-based violence.**
- **Theme:** "Nai Chetna - Pahal Badlav Ki" (A Step Towards Change).
- **Slogan:** "Ab koi bahana nahi" (No more excuses).
- Organized under DAY-NRLM, involving nine ministries to raise awareness across all Indian states and UTs.

8. Ashta Lakshmi Mahotsav

- **Inaugurated by PM Modi at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.**
- A three-day festival celebrating the eight states of Northeast India (the "Ashta Lakshmi").
- **Mascot:** 'Purvi', a young girl representing the cultural heritage and economic potential of the Northeast.

9. SheSTEM 2024

- **A collaborative initiative between the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the Swedish Embassy.**
- Aims to encourage women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths).
- **Challenge:** Students (Grades 6–12) presented innovative ideas on Battery Technology and Energy Storage (BEST) systems.

10. Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana

- **Launched by the Delhi Government.**
- The monthly financial assistance for eligible women was increased from ₹1,000 to ₹2,100 per month.

11. Access to Medicine Index Report 2024

- **The Access to Medicine Foundation released its 2024 index report.**
- Objective: The report evaluates the efforts of pharmaceutical companies to increase the availability of medicines in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).

11.1 Key Highlights:

- Despite housing 80% of the world's population, LMICs account for only 43% of clinical trials conducted worldwide. This limits the participation of LMIC populations in new drug development and delays their access to innovative treatments.
- Regional Imbalance: Voluntary licensing and technology transfers are concentrated in countries like Brazil, China, and India, leaving out much of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Strategy Gap: Over 61% of products evaluated lack specific access strategies for low-income countries.
- R&D Shift: Pharmaceutical companies are increasingly moving away from Research and Development (R&D) for primary diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases, which disproportionately affect LMICs.

12. Atal Innovation Mission 2.0 (AIM 2.0)

- **The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under NITI Aayog. AIM 2.0 has been launched with an allocation of ₹2,750 crore to strengthen India's innovation ecosystem until 2028.**
- Status: India ranks 39th in the Global Innovation Index and is the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem.

12.1 Key Programs under AIM 2.0:

- LIPI (Language Inclusive Program of Innovation): Establishing local innovation centers in 22 scheduled languages to support non-English speaking innovators.
- Frontier Program: Establishing 2,500 new Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) in underserved regions like J&K, Northeast states, and Aspirational Districts.
- Research Sandboxes: Creating environments to commercialize Deep Tech startups that require long-term investment.
- Industrial Accelerator Program: Aims to create 10 accelerators through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in critical sectors.

12.2 Core Pillars of AIM (Established in 2016):

- Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs): Established in schools (Grades 6-12) to teach IoT, 3D printing, etc.

- Atal Incubation Centres (AICs): Supporting startups with funding and technical mentorship.
- Mentor India: Engaging 6,200+ mentors to guide entrepreneurs.

13. Assessment of Universal Foundational Literacy in India

- **According to the 79th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) conducted between July 2022 and June 2023, 95.9% of Indians possess basic literacy and numeracy skills.**
- Definition: The NSS defines literacy as the ability to read, write, and understand a simple message in any language.
- Key Findings:
 - Rural vs Urban: 95.3% in rural areas vs 97.4% in urban areas.
 - Gender Gap (Rural): 97.4% for rural males vs 93.4% for rural females.
 - State Rankings: Mizoram (100%), Goa (99.9%), and Sikkim (99.9%) lead, while Bihar (91.9%) and Uttar Pradesh (92.3%) lag behind.
- Data Discrepancy: While NSS shows near-universal literacy (95.9%), the ASER 2023 Report highlights that many students in the 14-18 age group cannot read a Grade 2 level textbook.

14. PM-ABHIM (PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission)

- **Updates were provided in the Lok Sabha regarding this mission.**
- Background: Formerly known as PMASBY (PM Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana).
- Funding: Launched in 2021 with an outlay of ₹64,180 crore (2021-22 to 2025-26).
- Objective: To strengthen primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare infrastructure and enhance pandemic preparedness.
- Targets: Building 17,788 rural Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, 11,024 urban wellness centers, and 602 Critical Care Hospital Blocks in districts with a population over 5 lakh.

15. India Skills Report 2025

- **Released by Wheebox in collaboration with CII, AICTE, and AIU.**
- Top State: Maharashtra ranked 1st in employability with a rate of 84%.
- National Average: 55% of Indian graduates are expected to be employable by 2025 (up from 51.2% in 2024).
- Streams: Management graduates are the most employable (78%), followed by Engineering (71.5%).
- Gender Trend: Male employability is expected to rise (53.5%), while female employability is expected to decrease to 47.5%.

16. Sickle Cell Eradication Postage Stamp

- **A commemorative postage stamp was unveiled in Madhya Pradesh on (Janjatiya Gaurav Divas). It marks India's commitment to eradicating Sickle Cell Anemia by 2047, focusing on tribal communities.**

17. Hornbill Festival

- **The Hornbill Festival celebrated its 25th anniversary.**
- Location: Nagaland (known as the 'Land of Festivals').
- Duration: December 1 to December 10.
- Symbolism: Named after the Hornbill bird, which symbolizes loyalty and grace in Naga folklore. It showcases the heritage of 17 Naga tribes.

18. Ni-kshay Vahan

- **A mobile van was launched to identify and treat tuberculosis (TB) patients across the country.**

19. VISION Portal

- **Inaugurated by Dr. Jitendra Singh.**
- Full Form: Viksit Bharat Initiative for Student Innovation and Outreach Network.
- Developer: Utsav Foundation (NGO).
- Goal: To provide internship funding and practical experience to underprivileged youth.

20. Gyan-Kumbh 2024

- **A major educational event organized by Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas, held at Pondicherry University.**

21. 'The Teacher App'

- Unveiled by Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Developed by the Bharti Airtel Foundation to empower teachers with 21st-century teaching skills.

22. UNESCO Status for West Bengal

- UNESCO recognized West Bengal as a Top Heritage Tourism Destination.

23. Telangana's Rythu Bharosa Scheme

- To be launched after the Sankranti festival, replacing the previous Rythu Bandhu scheme. It will provide an annual grant of ₹15,000 per farmer.

24. Google-NCERT Partnership

- Google partnered with NCERT to launch YouTube channels for students (Grades 1-12) in 29 Indian languages, including Indian Sign Language.

25. Gita Jayanti 2024 Records

- Bhopal: Set a Guinness World Record with over 5,000 Acharyas reciting 'Karmayoga' from the Bhagavad Gita.
- Kurukshetra: 18,000 children led a Gita chant joined by 1.5 crore people globally online.
- Partner Country: Tanzania was the partner nation for the International Gita Mahotsav.

Environment

1. 56th and 57th Tiger Reserves of the Country

1.1 Guru Ghasidas - Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve:

- Following the advice of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the Chhattisgarh government notified the Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve in November 2024.
- It has become the 56th Tiger Reserve in the country.
- It is the third-largest tiger reserve in India, after the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve (Andhra Pradesh) and Manas Tiger Reserve (Assam).
- This is the 4th tiger reserve in Chhattisgarh.

1.2 Ratapani Tiger Reserve:

- In December 2024, the Madhya Pradesh government notified the Ratapani Tiger Reserve, making it the 57th Tiger Reserve in the country.
- This is the 8th tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh.
- Notification of Tiger Reserves:
- Tiger reserves in India are notified by state governments under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. This process is carried out based on the advice of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

1.3 Recently Notified Tiger Reserves:

- 57- Ratapani Tiger Reserve – Madhya Pradesh (2024)
- 56 - Guru Ghasidas - Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve – Chhattisgarh (2024)
- 55 - Dholpur-Karauli Tiger Reserve – Rajasthan (2023)
- 54 - Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve – Madhya Pradesh (2023)
- 53 - Ranipur Tiger Reserve – Uttar Pradesh (2022)
- 52- Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve – Rajasthan (2022)

1.4 The Tiger (Panthera tigris):

- Scientific Name: Panthera tigris
- Indian Subspecies: Panthera tigris tigris (Bengal Tiger).
- Habitat: Ranges from Siberian temperate forests to sub-tropical and tropical forests of the Indian subcontinent and Sumatra.

- Global Tiger Day: July 29
- Conservation Status:
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:
- Project Tiger:
- Launch: April 1, 1973, from Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand (during PM Indira Gandhi's tenure).
- Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Implementation Body: National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
- Tiger Man of India: Kailash Sankhala of Rajasthan. He was the first conservationist to raise his voice for tiger protection in 1956 and became the first Director of Project Tiger in 1973.
- Status of Tigers in India:
- Estimated Population: Average 3,682 (Maximum estimate: 3,925).
- Annual Growth Rate: 6.1%.

1.5 States with Most Tigers:

1. Madhya Pradesh (785)
2. Karnataka (563)
3. Uttarakhand (560)
4. Maharashtra (444)
5. Tamil Nadu (306)

1.6 Tiger Reserves with Most Tigers:

6. Corbett (260)
 7. Bandipur (150)
 8. Nagarhole (141)
 9. Bandhavgarh (135)
 10. Dudhwa (135)
- Maharashtra's Top Reserve: Tadoba-Andhari (97 tigers).

1.7 Records:

- Largest by Core Area: Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam (Andhra Pradesh).
- Smallest by Core Area: Orang Tiger Reserve (Assam).

1.8 Tiger Reserves in Maharashtra:

No	Tiger Reserve	Location (District)	Est. Year	Key Highlight
1	Melghat	Amravati	1973-74	The first tiger reserve established in Maharashtra.
2	Tadoba-Andhari	Chandrapur	1993-94	Contains the oldest National Park in the state.
3	Pench	Nagpur	1999	An inter-state reserve shared with Madhya Pradesh.
4	Sahyadri	Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri	2007	The only tiger reserve located in Western Maharashtra.
5	Navegaon-Nagzira	Gondia and Bhandara	2013	Known as a major hub for nature tourism.
6	Bor	Wardha	2014	Recognized as the smallest tiger reserve in India by area.

2. UNCCD COP16 Summit

- **The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.**
- This was the first time a UNCCD COP was hosted in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.
- Key Outcomes of COP16 UNCCD:

- Global Drought Framework: Nations advanced efforts to finalize a framework before COP17 (to be held in Mongolia in 2026).
- Financial Pledges: Over 12 billion USD was pledged to address desertification, land degradation, and drought.
- Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership: 12.15 billion USD committed to help 80 vulnerable countries (including 10 billion USD from the Arab Coordination Group).
- **Great Green Wall (GGW) Initiative:** Austria and Italy pledged 3.6 million Euro and 11 million Euro respectively for land restoration in the Sahel.
- Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS): Nearly 70 million USD announced to build resilient food systems with climate-resilient crops.
- **Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities:** A caucus was created to represent their perspectives. The Sacred Lands Declaration was presented to increase their participation in global land governance.
- Business Land Initiative: Highlights the need for private sector participation. Currently, the private sector provides only 6% of finance for land restoration.

3. Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2025

- **The CCPI 2025 was released by Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute, and Climate Action Network International during the COP29 summit in Baku.**
- India's Rank: India is ranked 10th out of 63 countries and the European Union. (India was 7th in CCPI 2024).
- Top 3 Spots: Left blank as no country performed well enough to be compatible with the 1.5°C goal.

3.1 Rankings:

- 4) Denmark
- 5) Netherlands
- 6) UK
- 7) Philippines
- 8) Morocco
- 9) Norway
- 10) India

3.2 Bottom Performers:

- 67) Iran
- 66) Saudi Arabia
- 65) UAE
- 64) Russia

China (Ranked 55th) and the USA (Ranked 57th) remain among the highest emitting countries, and their climate targets are categorized as inadequate.

Argentina has dropped six places to 59th in CCPI 2025. The newly elected government there does not believe in man-made climate change, and the term "climate change" has been removed from all official documentation.

3.3 India's Performance:

- India ranks High in the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and Energy Use categories.
- It ranks Medium in Climate Policy and Low in Renewable Energy.
- Despite positive developments in the renewable sector, India remains heavily dependent on coal. India is among the top 10 countries with the largest developed coal reserves and currently plans to increase its production.

3.4 About the Index:

- Published annually since 2005, the CCPI is an independent monitoring tool to track the climate protection performance of countries.
- It is released by Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute, and Climate Action Network International.

- The index covers 63 countries and the European Union, which together account for over 90% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.
- Evaluation Categories: GHG Emissions (40%), Renewable Energy (20%), Energy Use (20%), and Climate Policy (20%).

4. Shanghai Leads in Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- **According to a new dataset released during the UN climate talks in Baku, Azerbaijan, cities in Asia and the United States contribute the most to greenhouse gas emissions.**
- Shanghai (256 million metric tons) tops the list of most polluting cities, followed by Tokyo, New York, Houston, and Seoul.
- This data was compiled by 'Climate TRACE' using advanced observations and Artificial Intelligence, highlighting the urgent need for global action.
- Total Emissions: 61.2 billion metric tons in 2023, recording a 0.7% increase compared to 2022.

4.1 Emission Trends:

- Highest Increase (2022-23): China, India, Iran, Indonesia, and Russia.
- Significant Decrease: Venezuela, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom, and the United States.
- Seven states or provinces in the world emit more than 1 billion metric tons; six of these are in China, and one is in Texas (USA).
- The Permian Basin in Texas is identified as the single highest individual polluting site globally.

5. Global Decline in Freshwater Reserves

- **According to recent data from the GRACE (Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment) satellites—a joint project between the U.S. space agency NASA and Germany's DLR—there has been a significant decline in the Earth's total freshwater levels since 2014.**

5.1 Key Findings:

- Between 2015 and 2023, freshwater stored on land, including lakes, rivers, and groundwater, decreased by 1,200 cubic kilometers worldwide.
- Half of the world's countries have poor freshwater management; water flow is decreasing in over 400 river basins, including iconic catchments like the Congo Basin.
- According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), 2023 was recorded as the driest year for rivers globally in three decades.

5.2 Findings Regarding India:

- India accounts for 18% of the global population but possesses only 4% of the world's freshwater resources and occupies only 2.4% of the Earth's surface area.
- Nearly half of India's rivers are polluted, and over 150 primary reservoirs are at only 38% of their storage capacity, intensifying the water crisis.
- According to NITI Aayog's 2018 Composite Water Management Index, a significant portion of India's population faces extreme water stress, with approximately 600 million Indians experiencing water scarcity.
- Groundwater depletion is a major concern, especially in agricultural states like Punjab and Haryana, where over-exploitation for irrigation and domestic use has led to a significant drop in water levels.
- Regions in Central and Western India, including Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Gujarat, frequently suffer from droughts, further depleting already stressed water reserves.

6. Global Plastic Treaty

- **Delegates failed to reach a consensus on the Global Plastic Treaty during the 5th meeting of the UN Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) held in Busan, South Korea.**
- Next Steps: Participating delegations agreed to schedule a second session in 2025 to finalize the treaty, tentatively named INC-5.2.
- Background: In 2022, at the UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi, a resolution was passed to establish global rules to curb plastic pollution by the end of 2024. However, nations have yet to reach an agreement.

6.1 Reasons for Failure to Reach Consensus:

- Limits on Plastic Production: A major point of contention is whether countries should agree to targets to reduce the production of virgin plastic polymers (made from raw materials derived from petroleum).

- A group of 66 countries led by Norway and Rwanda, including the EU, argued for production limits.
- Nations like Saudi Arabia and India, which rely heavily on petrochemicals and plastic production for their economies, opposed any measures limiting production.
- **Development Concerns:** India argued that regulating plastic production would violate its Right to Development, especially considering its role in the global plastic polymer market. India maintains that no treaty should hinder national development aspirations.
- **Unacceptable Targets:** The draft treaty proposed year-wise targets to phase out single-use plastics by 2040 and ban hazardous chemicals like DEHP, DBP, BBP, and DIBP. Some countries rejected these due to perceived negative economic impacts.
- **Disagreement over Scope:** Many nations want the treaty to address the entire life cycle of plastic (production, use, waste management), while others believe it should focus solely on waste management. This created tension between those seeking comprehensive solutions and those prioritizing immediate waste disposal.
- **Kuwait's Stance:** Kuwait criticized extending the mandate beyond plastic pollution, claiming it served as a pretext for trade restrictions and economic agendas.

7. Cyclone Fengal Hits Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

- **Life was disrupted in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry due to Cyclone 'Fengal' formed in the Bay of Bengal.**
- **Naming:** The name 'Fengal' was suggested by Saudi Arabia and assigned by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). In Arabic, 'Fengal' means a "strong wind storm."

8. Lake-Effect Snow

- **People living along the Great Lakes of North America—including Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan—experienced Lake-effect snow.**
- **Event:** Near Lake Erie in New York, a heavy snowstorm transformed houses into snow-covered "igloos."
- **Definition:** Lake-effect snow is a localized atmospheric phenomenon characterized by heavy snowfall near large bodies of water.

8.1 Mechanism:

- It occurs in cold months when cold air (often from Canada) passes over the relatively warm surface of a lake.
- The lake transfers heat and moisture to the cold air.
- The warm, moist air rises, cools rapidly in the upper atmosphere, and forms clouds.
- These clouds develop into narrow bands that produce intense snowfall (often 2-3 inches per hour or more).

9. 24 Coastal Villages in Odisha Receive UNESCO 'Tsunami Ready' Recognition

- **The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO) recently recognized 24 tsunami-prone villages in Odisha as 'Tsunami Ready.'**
- **Recognition:** Granted during the Second Global Tsunami Symposium in Indonesia on November 11, 2024.
- **Location:** These villages are in six coastal districts: Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, and Ganjam.
- **Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP):** Aims to build community preparedness. IOC-UNESCO evaluates communities based on 12 specific indicators, including education and response strategies.
- **Etymology:** The Japanese word Tsunami consists of 'Tsu' (harbor) and 'Nami' (wave).

10. Andhra Pradesh Government Abolishes Garbage Tax

- **The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a bill to abolish the Garbage Tax introduced by the previous YSRCP government.**
- **Objective:** To reduce the financial burden on citizens and investigate alleged contractor benefits related to the tax.

11. China Opens First Atmospheric Monitoring Station in Antarctica

- **China has launched its first atmospheric observation station in Antarctica.**
- **Location:** Located at Larsmann Hills, East Antarctica, the Zhongshan National Atmospheric Background Station aims to provide continuous, long-term monitoring of atmospheric components.

12. Nano Bubble Tech to Purify Delhi Zoo Pond Water

- **Union Minister of State Kirti Vardhan Singh inaugurated a 15-day trial of Nano Bubble Technology at the National Zoological Park in Delhi.**
- Objective: To improve the water quality in the zoo's ponds, benefiting aquatic animals by removing algae, foul odors, and discoloration caused by polluted water.
- Technology: Nano bubble technology uses microscopic bubbles to purify water and eliminate organic growth.

Science and Technology

1. 'One Day One Genome' Initiative

- **The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) launched the 'One Day One Genome' initiative.**
- It was inaugurated during the first anniversary of BRIC at the National Institute of Immunology (NII), New Delhi.

1.1 About the Initiative:

- This initiative is designed to highlight India's unique microbial diversity and its role in the environment, agriculture, and human health.
- It is coordinated by the BRIC-National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (BRIC-NIBMG).

1.2 Potential Benefits:

- **Pollution Control:** Understanding microbial functions can lead to better waste management and pollution control strategies.
- **Agriculture:** Information on beneficial microbes can increase crop yields and promote sustainable farming.
- **Medicine:** Identifying microbes with antibiotic properties can lead to the development of new treatments and drugs.

2. Nafithromycin: India's Indigenous Antibiotic

- **India unveiled Nafithromycin, its first indigenous antibiotic designed to tackle the global challenge of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).**
- The launch coincided with World AMR Awareness Week (November 18–24, 2024), which carried the theme: "Preventing Antimicrobial Resistance Together."
- Developed with support from the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), it has been brought to market by Wockhardt under the brand name Mignaf.
- This marks the first new antibiotic in its class to be developed in over 30 years.
- **Application:** It is specifically developed to treat Community-Acquired Bacterial Pneumonia (CABP) caused by drug-resistant bacteria like *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

3. Centenary of Bose-Einstein Statistics

- **Marked the centenary of Bose-Einstein Statistics, honoring Satyendra Nath Bose for his unparalleled work on particle indistinguishability.**
- His contributions laid the foundation for major advancements in quantum mechanics, including the Bose-Einstein Condensate (BEC).

3.1 Who was Satyendra Nath Bose?

- **Born in Calcutta on January 1, 1894, he was a brilliant student who mastered mathematics at a young age. Inspired by Jagadish Chandra Bose, he ventured into quantum mechanics.**
- **Scientific Achievement:** In 1924, he published the paper "Planck's Law and the Hypothesis of Light Quanta," introducing a new way to count particles (specifically photons) as indistinguishable entities.
- **Collaboration with Einstein:** Albert Einstein recognized the paper's importance and expanded upon Bose's ideas, leading to the development of Bose-Einstein Statistics.

3.2 Key Concepts:

- **Bosons vs. Fermions:** Bose-Einstein statistics distinguish between two classes of particles. Bosons (named after Bose) can occupy the same quantum state, making them indistinguishable. This property enables phenomena like superconductivity and superfluidity.
- **Bose-Einstein Condensate (BEC):** This unique state of matter occurs when bosonic atoms are cooled to absolute zero (-273.15°C). They merge into a single quantum state with wave-like properties. This was experimentally confirmed in 1995 by Eric Cornell and Carl Wieman.
- **Legacy:** Known as the "Father of the God Particle," S.N. Bose was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1954 and became India's National Professor in 1959.

4. SVASTIK Initiative

- **The CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (NISCP) inaugurated the International Conference on Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge (CDTK-2024).**
- SVASTIK (Scientifically Validated Traditional Knowledge) is a national initiative aimed at promoting and disseminating traditional Indian knowledge that has been scientifically validated.

5. Bioplastics

- **Balrampur Chini Mills (one of India's leading sugar producers) announced a ₹2,000 crore investment to build India's first bioplastic factory in Uttar Pradesh.**
- **What are Bioplastics?** Unlike traditional petroleum-based plastics, bioplastics are derived from renewable organic sources like sugarcane and corn.
- **Production:** Sugar is extracted from plants and converted into Polylactic Acid (PLA). Alternatively, Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs) can be produced using microorganisms.
- **Benefits:** It offers a new revenue stream for sugar industries beyond sugar and ethanol, with an expected annual income of ₹1,700–1,800 crore.

6. DHARINI: 3D Fetal Brain Atlas

- **Researchers at IIT Madras have developed DHARINI, a revolutionary tool that creates a detailed 3D map of the fetal brain.**
- **Significance:** It is the world's largest and most high-resolution 3D fetal brain atlas, mapping over 5,000 brain segments and 500 brain regions.
- It focuses on the second trimester (weeks 14, 17, 21, 22, and 24), a critical period for rapid growth.
- It helps in identifying brain disorders like Autism and provides insights into mental health issues like Cerebral Palsy and Depression.

7. GenCast: Google's AI Model

- **Google DeepMind introduced GenCast, an AI model capable of providing highly accurate weather forecasts.**
- It outperformed the leading system, the ECMWF's ENS. Beyond daily weather, it can track extreme events like deadly storms.

7.1 Sora:

- In December 2024, OpenAI unveiled Sora (branded as Sora Turbo) for paid members.
- This AI video generation model can create up to 20 seconds of video in 1080p resolution from text prompts.

8. 10th India International Science Festival (IISF) 2024 at IIT Guwahati

- **The 10th India International Science Festival (IISF) 2024 was held at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati.**
- **Theme of the 10th Edition:** Transforming India into an S&T-driven Global Manufacturing Hub.
- **Significance:** This is the first time this prestigious festival has been organized in the Northeast region of the country.
- **Overview:** IISF is India's largest science event, engaging both the general public and the scientific community.
- **Organizers:** It was organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Earth Sciences in collaboration with Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA).
- **Nodal Agency:** Every year, a specific department/lab coordinates the event. For the 10th edition, the CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST), Thiruvananthapuram, was the coordinating institute.

- History:
 - The 9th edition (2023) was held in Faridabad, Haryana (January 2024).
 - The 1st edition was held in 2015 at IIT Delhi.

9. Bacteria for Solving Mathematical Problems

- **Researchers at the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, have engineered Escherichia coli (E. coli) bacteria to function as biological computers. This is a significant advancement in synthetic biology.**
- **BactoNet:** The team developed "BactoNet"—engineered bacteria that function like neurons in a neural network.
- **Mechanism:** These "bacto-neurons" process chemical inputs and produce fluorescent proteins based on specific calculations.
- **Capabilities:** These bacteria are capable of solving mathematical problems, such as determining if a number is prime or if a letter is a vowel.

10. ICMR's 'First in the World Challenge' for Innovation

- **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) announced the "First in the World Challenge" to encourage innovative solutions to health problems.**
- **Objective:** To foster "out-of-the-box" ideas and promote the discovery and development of progressive health technologies, including vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics.
- **Criteria:** Proposals must present bold, impactful global health research concepts. This is a "high-risk, high-reward" challenge aimed at revolutionary biomedical progress.
- **About ICMR:** It is the apex body in India for formulating, coordinating, and promoting biomedical research. It functions under the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

11. Google's Quantum Computing Breakthrough

- **Google unveiled a new quantum computer powered by a chip named 'Willow'.**
- **Performance:** This quantum computer is capable of performing calculations in less than five minutes that would take the most advanced supercomputer over 10 septillion years (a duration longer than the age of the known universe).

11.1 Classical vs. Quantum Computing:

- **Classical Computers:** Process information as bits (either 1 or 0).
- **Quantum Computers:** Utilize the principles of quantum mechanics, specifically qubits. Unlike bits, qubits can exist in a state of superposition (both 1 and 0 simultaneously). This allows for an exponential increase in computational power.

12. Disease X

- **An outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) caused over 400 deaths, raising concerns about what is currently being referred to as "Disease X."**
- **Definition:** "Disease X" is a hypothetical term used by the WHO (since 2018) for an unknown pathogen capable of triggering a global pandemic.
- **Origin:** The term emerged following the 2014-2016 West African Ebola epidemic.
- **Nature:** These diseases can arise from viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, or prions. Since 1940, over 300 emerging diseases have been detected, 70% of which were zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans).

13. IISc Unveils STRONG

- **Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, have created a new language called STRONG (STRING Representation Of Nanopore Geometry).**
- **Function:** It encodes the shape and structure of a nanopore into a sequence of characters.
- **Application:** This language can be used to train any Machine Learning model to predict the properties of nanopores in various materials.
- **Mechanism:** Just as ChatGPT predicts text data, neural networks can read characters in STRONG to understand what a nanopore looks like and predict its properties.

14. Nanopore Technology

- **Nanopore technology is a laboratory technique used to sequence DNA and RNA molecules by using tiny holes (pores) in a membrane.**
- Mechanism: A nanopore is a microscopic hole embedded in an electrically resistant membrane. When a DNA or RNA molecule passes through the nanopore, it causes a disruption in the ionic current, creating a signal. This signal is then decoded to determine the sequence of bases in the molecule.

14.1 Applications:

- Genomic analysis
- Pathogen identification
- Environmental monitoring
- Food safety monitoring

Defense and Space

1. Launch of GSAT-N2 (GSAT-20) Satellite

- **India's communication satellite GSAT-N2 was successfully launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida (USA) using SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket.**
- This marks India's first joint project with Elon Musk's SpaceX.
- The satellite belongs to NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of ISRO.
- Specifications: Weighing 4700 kg, GSAT-N2 is a High-Throughput Satellite (HTS) operating in the Ka-Ka band with a capacity of 48 Gbps. It is designed to enhance broadband and in-flight connectivity across India.

2. Axiom-4 Mission

- **ISRO announced in that the two Indian astronauts selected for the Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) have completed their initial training.**
- The Astronauts:
 - Prime: Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla
 - Backup: Group Captain Prashant Balakrishnan Nair
- About Ax-4: This is a private spaceflight to the ISS by Axiom Space. It will use SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket and the Crew Dragon spacecraft.
- This collaboration between ISRO and NASA highlights India's growing presence in human space exploration.

3. India's First Long-Range Hypersonic Missile Trial

- **DRDO successfully tested a long-range hypersonic missile from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.**
- Range: It can carry various payloads for distances exceeding 1,500 km.
- **What is a Hypersonic Missile?** - A vehicle or projectile traveling at speeds of Mach 5 or higher (at least five times the speed of sound, roughly 6,174 km/h).
- **Types:** Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGV) and Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCM).
- Unlike ballistic missiles that follow a high, predictable arc, hypersonic missiles fly at lower altitudes and are highly maneuverable, making them extremely difficult to track and intercept.

4. MOI-TD: India's First AI Lab in Space

- **Hyderabad-based space tech company TakeMe2Space (TM2Space) announced the launch of India's first AI laboratory in space, named MOI-TD (My Orbital Infrastructure - Technology Demonstrator).**
- It was scheduled for launch via ISRO's PSLV C60.
- This platform enables real-time data processing in orbit, allowing users to upload AI models for tasks like environmental monitoring without the delays caused by cloud cover on Earth.

5. PSLV-C59/PROBA-3 Mission

- **ISRO's PSLV-C59 successfully launched the European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 mission from Sriharikota.**

- Objective: It is the world's first precision formation-flying mission.
- The Duo: It consists of two satellites—the Coronagraph and the Occulter. They fly in a rigid formation where one casts a shadow on the other to create an artificial solar eclipse.
- This allows scientists to study the Sun's corona for up to six hours at a time, compared to just minutes during a natural eclipse.

6. Zorawar – Indian Light Tank (ILT)

- **The Indian light tank Zorawar successfully completed firing trials at altitudes exceeding 4,200 meters in Ladakh.**
- Developed jointly by DRDO and Larsen & Toubro (L&T), this 25-ton tank is designed specifically for high-altitude warfare.
- It is named after the 19th-century Dogra General Zorawar Singh.



7. ISRO and ASA Cooperation for Gaganyaan

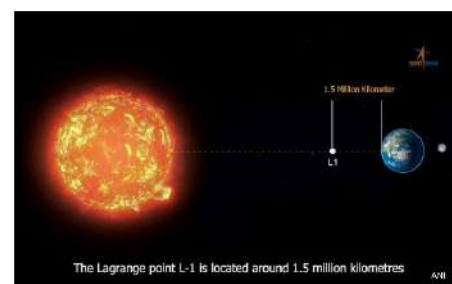
- **ISRO signed an agreement with the Australian Space Agency (ASA) to support the Gaganyaan mission.**
- Australia will assist in the recovery of the crew and crew module if an emergency landing occurs in the ocean near their territory.
- Gaganyaan Timeline: The first uncrewed mission is targeted for 2024–25, with the first crewed mission aimed for 2025–27.

8. INSV Tarini: Global Circumnavigation "Navika Sagar Parikrama II"

- **INSV Tarini, a 56-foot sailing vessel, began the second leg of its global voyage, sailing from Australia to New Zealand.**
- The crew consists of two brave women officers: Lt Cdr Dilna K and Lt Cdr Roopa A.
- This 21,600 nautical mile journey relies solely on wind power and is being completed without external assistance.

9. Aditya-L1 and Proba-3: Solar Research Duo

- **India's Aditya-L1 and ESA's Proba-3 will begin joint observations of the Sun in 2025.**
- While Aditya-L1 observes the Sun from the Lagrange Point 1 (1.5 million km from Earth), Proba-3 will provide a close-up look at the corona, revolutionizing solar physics.



10. Successful Test-Fire of K-4 Missile from INS Arighaat

- **A successful test-firing of the K-4 Missile was conducted from the submarine INS Arighaat off the coast of Visakhapatnam.**
- Significance: This was the first-ever test of a Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) conducted from this specific submarine.

10.1 K-4 Missile Features:

- It is a nuclear-capable ballistic missile with a range of approximately 3,500 kilometers.
- It can carry a 2-ton payload. It features a two-stage solid rocket motor and uses solid rocket propellant.
- Dimensions: 10 meters long, weighing 20 tons, with a diameter of 1.3 meters.

10.2 INS Arighaat:

- Commissioned into the Indian Navy on August 29, 2024, it is the second Arihant-class submarine.
- It is India's second SSBN (Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear) submarine after INS Arihant.
- It features significant upgrades over the first indigenous nuclear submarine, INS Arihant.

- While INS Arihant is equipped with K-15 missiles (750 km range), INS Arighaat is capable of striking with more advanced K-4 missiles (3,500 km range).



11. Dr. Jayathirth Joshi - New Head of BrahMos Aerospace

- Dr. Jayathirth Raghavendra Joshi was appointed as the new CEO & MD of BrahMos Aerospace. He took over the charge from the previous head, Atul Dinkar Rane.

11.1 About Dr. Jayathirth Joshi:

- With a career spanning over three decades, he has contributed significantly to missile technology, Non-Destructive Testing (NDT), and professional skill development.
- He holds a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering from Osmania University and a Ph.D. from NIT Warangal.
- He played a vital role in India's missile programs, specifically the Prithvi and Agni systems. As the Associate Project Director for the LRSAM (Long Range Surface-to-Air Missile) program, he was instrumental in developing mission-critical technologies.

11.2 BrahMos Aerospace:

- A joint venture between India's DRDO (50.5% share) and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya (49.5% share), established on December 5, 1995.
- Name Origin: A combination of the names of the Brahmaputra (India) and Moskva (Russia) rivers.
- The Missile: BrahMos is a long-range, nuclear-capable supersonic cruise missile that can be deployed from land, sea, or air. It travels at speeds up to Mach 3 with a range between 290 to 800 km.

12. Optical Fiber in Siachen

- The Indian Army successfully established optical fiber connectivity in Siachen and Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) for the first time to ensure high-speed broadband connectivity.
- Technology: Fiber optic cables use fast-traveling pulses of light to transfer digital information. They operate on the principle of Total Internal Reflection.
- Shutterstock
- Siachen: The world's highest and coldest battlefield, strategically located between Pakistan (Left) and China (Right). The Nubra River originates from the Siachen Glacier. India has controlled Siachen since Operation Meghdoot in 1984.
- DBO: An Indian military base located at the northernmost tip of India in the Karakoram Mountains.

13. Eklavya Platform

- In The Ministry of Defence launched 'Eklavya', an online learning platform for the Indian Army.
- Objective: To improve the professional education and training of Indian Army officers under the "Decade of Transformation (2023-2032)" initiative, with the 2024 theme being the "Year of Technology Absorption."
- Developer: Developed by BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics), Gandhinagar.

14. India Adopts CubeSat Standards

- In a significant step to increase its footprint in the global space economy, India recently adopted global CubeSat Standards.

14.1 CubeSat:

- These standards define a modular satellite framework where 1 Unit (U) = 10 cm³ and weighs approximately 1.33 kg.
- They can be scaled to larger sizes like 1.5U, 2U, 3U, 6U, and even 12U.
- Implementation: The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) helps academic and research institutions develop CubeSats. Notable examples of Indian student satellites include JUGNU (IIT Kanpur) and KalamSAT (Space Kidz India).

15. Earth Copilot

- **NASA has partnered with Microsoft to develop a custom Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbot named "Earth Copilot."**
- Purpose: It uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) to respond to user queries about Earth science data in an easy-to-understand format, making NASA's vast database accessible to a wider range of users.

16. CINBAX

- **The Indian Army and the Cambodian Army conducted their first-ever joint table-top exercise named CINBAX at the Foreign Training Node in Pune.**
- Objective: To enhance strategic cooperation, trust, and interoperability between the two nations.

17. Harimau Shakti Exercise

- **The 4th edition of the India-Malaysia joint military exercise, HARIMAU SHAKTI, at Bentong Camp in the Pahang district of Malaysia.**
- Other India-Malaysia Exercises:
 - Samudra Laksamana (Navy)
 - Udara Shakti (Air Force)

Awards and Books

1. Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad Conferred with Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2023

- **The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for the year 2023 was presented on November 19, 2024, to classical pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim and Palestinian peace activist Ali Abu Awwad.**
- The duo was recognized for their joint efforts in fostering harmony between Israeli and Palestinian youth and citizens.
- The ceremony was held virtually on the birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi, attended by Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.

1.1 Daniel Barenboim:

- An Argentine-born world-renowned pianist and conductor.
- He believes music plays a vital role in overcoming differences and divisions.
- He co-founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra and the Barenboim-Said Academy to bring together young musicians from Israel, Palestine, and other Arab countries.

1.2 Ali Abu Awwad:

- A prominent Palestinian peace activist working toward a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict.
- In 2014, he co-founded Roots, a Palestinian-Israeli initiative. His efforts led to the creation of the Taghyeer Palestinian non-violence movement in the West Bank in 2016.

1.3 About the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize:

- Established: 1986.
- Awarded by: Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.
- Prize: ₹25 lakh and a citation.
- Recent Winners:
 - 2023: Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad.

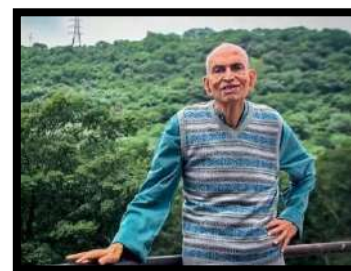
- 2022: COVID-19 Warriors (IMA and Trained Nurses Association of India).
- 2021: Pratham (NGO).
- 2019: Sir David Attenborough.

2. Madhav Gadgil Honored with UN 'Champions of the Earth' Lifetime Achievement Award

- In December 2024, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced the prestigious 'Champions of the Earth' award (Lifetime Achievement category) for veteran ecologist Dr. Madhav Gadgil.
- He is one of six global winners this year.
- About the Award: Established in 2005, it is the UN's highest environmental honor.

2.1 About Madhav Gadgil:

- A world-renowned naturalist and former professor at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.
- He is credited with the establishment of India's first biosphere reserve, the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, in 1986.
- He chaired the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) in 2010. His 2011 report (the Gadgil Report) recommended declaring the entire Western Ghats as an Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA).



3. Donald Trump: TIME Person of the Year 2024

- In December 2024, TIME magazine named U.S. President-elect Donald Trump as the 2024 Person of the Year.
- This is his second time receiving the honor; he was previously selected in 2016.
- About the Honor: Started in 1927. Mahatma Gandhi remains the only Indian to have been named "Man of the Year" (in 1930) following the Dandi March.

3.1 Recent Winners:

- 2022: Volodymyr Zelensky & the Spirit of Ukraine.
- 2023: Taylor Swift. 2024: Donald Trump.

4. "My Beloved Life" by Amitav Kumar

- This novel tells the story of Jadunath "Jadu" Kunwar and his daughter Jugnu from a small village in Bihar.
- It explores their journey through love, loss, and growth against the backdrop of historical events that shaped India.

5. Payal Kapadia's Golden Globe Nomination

- Director Payal Kapadia has been nominated for the 82nd Golden Globe Awards (2025) in the Best Director (Motion Picture) category.
- She is the first Indian director to receive a nomination in this category.
- Her film, All We Imagine as Light, also earned a nomination for Best Motion Picture – Non-English Language.
- Previously, this film won the prestigious Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival.

6. "The Kumbaya Story" Wins TVE Global Sustainability Film Award

- The Indian film The Kumbaya Story won in the Transforming Society Short Film category at the 13th TVE Global Sustainability Film Awards (GSFA) held in London.
- Produced by Kumbaya Producer Company Limited, the film showcases the journey of resilient women transforming their lives through weaving.



7. National Gopal Ratna Award 2024

- In November 2024, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying announced the winners of the National Gopal Ratna Award (NGRA) 2024 under the 'Rashtriya Gokul Mission' (RGM).
- Significance: It is one of the highest honors in the livestock and dairy sector, presented on November 26, 2024, on the occasion of National Milk Day.

7.1 Award Categories:

1. Best Dairy Farmer rearing indigenous cattle/buffalo breeds.
2. Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT).
3. Best Dairy Cooperative/Milk Producer Company/Dairy Farmer Producer Organization.
 - New Addition: In 2024, special awards were introduced for the North Eastern Region (NER).
 - About Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM): Launched in 2014 under the National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBDD) to conserve and develop indigenous breeds.

8. Global Award for Digital Innovations to Hyderabad Airport

- **The GMR Hyderabad International Airport (GHIAL) was honored with the 'Airport Excellence Awards' during the 'Saudi Airport Exhibition 2024' for its digital innovations.**
- Key Achievement: The airport won awards in Innovation & Technology and Facility Management for its 'Digital Twin' technology.
- Note: A 'Digital Twin' is a virtual model designed to accurately reflect a physical object, like an airport, to monitor and improve its operations.

9. Coal India Limited Wins the 2024 Green World Environment Award

- **Coal India Limited (CIL), functioning under the Ministry of Coal, received the prestigious Green World Environment Award 2024 in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) category.**
- Title: CIL was also honored with the title of 'Green World Ambassador' for its commitment to sustainability and social welfare.
- Notable Initiative: A significant part of CIL's CSR work is the 'Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana', which provides permanent treatment for Thalassemia patients through Bone Marrow Transplants (BMT).

10. Victoria Kjær Theilvig Becomes Denmark's First Miss Universe

- **In November 2024, the 73rd Miss Universe pageant held in Mexico was won by Victoria Kjær Theilvig of Denmark.**
 - Record: She has become the first-ever Miss Universe from Denmark.
 - Indian Representative: Rhea Singha participated in this competition representing India.

11. Bharati Kolli Honored as an Emerging Star in Banking

- **In December 2024, Bharati Kolli, a 43-year-old woman from the Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh, was recognized as one of the Emerging Star Women Leaders in Banking for 2024 by the prominent women's group, Women We Admire.**
- Current Role: She is currently serving as the Director of the Data Management Office at the New York headquarters of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC).

Sports

1. D. Gukesh: The Youngest World Chess Champion

- **Indian Grandmaster Dommaraju Gukesh, popularly known as D. Gukesh, earned the distinction of becoming the youngest World Chess Champion in history at the age of 18.**
- In the 2024 FIDE World Chess Championship held in Singapore in December 2024, he clinched the title by defeating China's Ding Liren (the 2023 World Champion) in a scheduled 14-game match.
- During the 14 classical games, Gukesh secured three wins and nine draws, while Ding managed two wins.
- Gukesh won the 14th and final game to win the championship with a final scoreline of $7\frac{1}{2} - 6\frac{1}{2}$.
- He is the second Indian to become a World Champion after the legendary Viswanathan Anand. Anand, a five-time champion (2000–2002 and 2007–2013), had last won the title in 2012.
- Gukesh broke the long-standing record of Garry Kasparov for being the youngest champion. In 1985, Russia's Kasparov became the youngest champion at age 22 after defeating then-champion Anatoly Karpov.

1.1 About D. Gukesh:

- Full Name: Dommaraju Gukesh.
- Birth: May 29, 2006, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, to a Telugu family originally from Andhra Pradesh.
- Career Milestones:
- January 15, 2019: At age 12 years, 7 months, and 17 days, he became the second-youngest Grandmaster in history (currently the third-youngest after Abhimanyu Mishra broke the record).
- October 2022: Became the youngest player to defeat World Champion Magnus Carlsen.
- August 2023: Youngest player to reach a 2750 rating.
- September 2023: Surpassed Viswanathan Anand as India's top-ranked player, the first Indian to do so in 37 years.
- April 2024: Youngest player to win the FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament.
- Silver Medal: Part of the Indian men's team at the 2022 Hangzhou Asian Games.
- Gold Medal: Contributed significantly (winning individual gold) to India's team gold at the Chess Olympiad in Hungary.
- Awards: Asian Chess Federation Player of the Year (2023); Sportstar Aces Best Young Achiever (2023); Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award (2024).

2. Jay Shah: Youngest Chairman in ICC History

- **Following the completion of his five-year term as Secretary of the Indian Cricket Board (BCCI), Jay Shah assumed the Chairmanship of the International Cricket Council (ICC).**
- He took over the charge from New Zealand's Greg Barclay.
- At 36 years old, Shah is the youngest ever to hold this position and the fifth Indian to lead the ICC.
- He was elected unopposed to the post in August 2024.
- **Background:** Son of Home Minister Amit Shah, Jay Shah became the President of the Gujarat Cricket Association in 2009. He played a pivotal role in developing the world's largest cricket stadium (Narendra Modi Stadium) in Ahmedabad.
- He previously served as the youngest Honorary Secretary of the BCCI, President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), and Chairman of the ICC's Finance and Commercial Affairs Committee.

2.1 Indians who have headed the ICC:

Name	Period	Position Held
Jagmohan Dalmiya	1997 - 2000	ICC President
Sharad Pawar	2010 - 2012	ICC President
N. Srinivasan	2014 - 2015	ICC Chairman
Shashank Manohar	2015 - 2020	ICC Chairman
Jay Shah	2024 - Present	ICC Chairman

2.2 About the ICC:

- The International Cricket Council, established in 1909, is the global governing body for cricket. Representing 108 members, its headquarters have been in Dubai since 2005 (previously located in London).

3. India to Host First-Ever Kho-Kho World Cup in 2025

- **The first-ever Kho-Kho World Cup is scheduled to be held from January 13 to 19, 2025, at the Indira Gandhi Indoor (IGI) Stadium in New Delhi.**
- The Kho-Kho Federation of India (KKFI), with the support of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), will organize this prestigious tournament.
- The World Cup will feature 24 teams from six continents, competing in both the men's and women's categories.

4. India Wins Fifth Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup

- **In the Junior Asia Cup Hockey tournament held in Muscat, Oman (Nov-Dec 2024), the Indian Men's Junior Hockey team defeated arch-rivals Pakistan 5-3 in the final.**
- With this victory, India secured its fifth Junior Asia Cup title and achieved a hat-trick of consecutive wins.

5. FIFA World Cup Hosts for 2030 and 2034

- **2030 FIFA World Cup: Spain, Portugal, and Morocco will jointly host the tournament. To mark the centenary of the World Cup, additional matches will be played in Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.**
- 2034 FIFA World Cup: Saudi Arabia has been selected as the host country for the 2034 edition.

6. Verstappen Wins Fourth Consecutive F1 Championship (2024)

- **Max Verstappen secured his fourth consecutive Formula One Championship after finishing fifth in the Las Vegas Grand Prix.**
- To clinch the Drivers' Championship for the fourth time in a row, Verstappen simply needed to finish ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris in the Las Vegas race.
- The 27-year-old Belgian-Dutch driver, who drives for the Red Bull team, previously won the F1 Drivers' Championship in 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- Verstappen is now only the sixth driver in the history of F1 racing to win at least four world championships.

7. Magnus Carlsen Wins Tata Steel Chess India 2024

- **Norwegian chess grandmaster Magnus Carlsen clinched titles in both the Open Rapid and Blitz categories at the Tata Steel Chess India 2024 tournament held in Kolkata.**

7.1 Winners of Tata Steel Chess India 2024:

- Open Rapid Winner: Magnus Carlsen (Norway)
- Open Blitz Winner: Magnus Carlsen (Norway)
- Women's Rapid Winner: Alexandra Goryachkina (Russia)
- Women's Blitz Winner: Kateryna Lagno (Russia)

8. IPL 2025 Auction

- **The auction for the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.**
- Record Buy: Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant became the most expensive player in IPL history. He was bought by Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) for ₹27 crore.
- **Major Signings:** Shreyas Iyer was bought by Punjab Kings (PBKS) for ₹26.75 crore, and Venkatesh Iyer was acquired by Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) for ₹23.75 crore.
- Other Highlights:
 - Most Expensive Overseas Player: Jos Buttler (Gujarat Titans (GT): ₹15.75 crore).
 - Most Expensive Uncapped Player: Rasikh Dar (Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB): ₹6 crore).
 - Vaibhav Suryavanshi: At just 13 years old, Bihar's Vaibhav Suryavanshi became the youngest player ever to be shortlisted for an IPL auction. He was signed by Rajasthan Royals for ₹1.1 crore.

9. Kush Maini: First Indian to win F2 Constructors' Championship

- **Indian Formula 2 driver Kush Maini finished 13th in the Drivers' Standings in his second F2 season, while his team, Invicta Racing, won the Constructors' Championship.**
 - **Record:** He is the first driver from India to be part of an FIA Constructors' World Championship-winning team.
 - **Performance:** The 24-year-old played a crucial role in Invicta Racing's success, winning five podiums, including a race victory in Hungary.

10. FIFA Unveils NASA-Inspired Club World Cup Trophy

- **FIFA unveiled the trophy for the Club World Cup 2025.**
 - The Tournament: Featuring 32 clubs from around the world, the tournament will be held in the United States for the first time in June and July 2025.
 - Design: Crafted in collaboration with Tiffany & Co., this 24-carat gold-plated trophy features an innovative design with a series of disks that transform into a multidimensional orbital structure.
 - Inspiration: The design is inspired by NASA's 1970 Voyager mission, the periodic table, and maps of celestial journeys.
 - Features: It includes inscriptions in 13 languages, Braille, a map of the world, and the names of all 211 FIFA member associations. It has space to engrave the emblems of winning clubs for the next 96 years.

11. Mithali Raj Appointed Mentor for ACA Women's Cricket Operations

- Former captain of the Indian Women's Cricket Team, Mithali Raj, has been appointed as a Mentor for Women's Cricket Operations by the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA). In this role, she will focus on scouting and nurturing young cricket talent across the state.

12. Indian Women's Team Retains Asian Champions Trophy Title

- The Indian Women's Hockey team successfully defended their title by defeating China 1-0 in the Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2024 held in Rajgir, Bihar.
- Record: This is India's third title (previously won in 2016 and 2023).
- Top Scorer: India's Deepika scored the most goals in the tournament (11 goals).

13. Olympic Medalist Emma McKeon Announces Retirement

- **Legendary Australian swimmer Emma McKeon announced her retirement.**
- Achievements: She won a total of 14 medals (6 Gold, 3 Silver, 5 Bronze) across three Summer Olympics.
- Tokyo 2020 Record: The 7 medals she won in Tokyo are the most by any female swimmer in a single Olympics and the most by any female athlete in a single edition of the Games.

14. India's Divith Reddy Wins Under-8 World Champion Title

- Eight-year-old Divith Reddy from Hyderabad became the Under-8 winner at the World Cadet Chess Championships held in Montesilvano, Italy.
- Other Medalists: Satwik Swain won Silver, and China's Zhiming Guo won Bronze.

15. Bangladesh Wins 'Under-19 Asia Cup' Title

- The Bangladesh Under-19 team successfully defended their Asia Cup title by securing a dominant 59-run victory over India in the final. The tournament was held in the UAE in November-December 2024.

16. Shaheen Afridi – Youngest to 100 Wickets in All Formats

- At 24 years and 248 days, Pakistan's Shaheen Afridi became the youngest player in the world and the first Pakistani cricketer to take 100 wickets in each of the three formats (Test, ODI, and T20). He reached this milestone during the first T20 match against South Africa.

17. Nandan Kumar Jha Elected President of IMSA

- India's Nandan Kumar Jha has been elected as the President of the International Mind Sports Association (IMSA) at its Annual General Meeting in São Paulo, Brazil.
- About IMSA: It regulates nine mind sports, including Chess, Draughts, Esports, Poker, Go, and Bridge. It has over 200 member countries and collaborates with the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Personalities in the News

1. Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna (S. M. Krishna)

- S. M. Krishna, the former Governor of Maharashtra and former Chief Minister of Karnataka, passed away in December 2024 at the age of 92.
- Birth: Born on May 1, 1932, in Somanahalli, Mandya district, Karnataka.
- Education: He earned a Master's degree in Law (LLM) from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and graduated from George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C., where he was a Fulbright Scholar.

1.1 Political Career:

- He entered politics as an Independent, winning the Maddur constituency in the 1962 Assembly elections by defeating Congress veteran K.V. Shankar Gowda. He later joined the Praja Socialist Party and eventually the Congress.

- **Parliamentary Debut:** Elected to the Lok Sabha in 1968 and served two consecutive terms. He returned to state politics in 1972 after being elected to the Legislative Council, serving as Minister for Commerce, Industry, and Parliamentary Affairs (1972–1977).
- **Union Roles:** Returned to the Lok Sabha in 1980; served as Union Minister of State for Industry (1983–84) and Finance (1984–85).
- **State Leadership:** Served as Speaker of the Karnataka Assembly (1989) and Deputy Chief Minister (1992).
- **Chief Minister (1999–2004):** As the 10th CM of Karnataka, he is credited with boosting the IT sector, which developed Bengaluru as an alternative to California's Silicon Valley and created vast employment for youth.
- **Governor (2004–2008):** Served as the 18th Governor of Maharashtra.
- **External Affairs Minister (2009–2012):** Served in the Manmohan Singh-led government.
- He joined the BJP in 2017, ending a 50-year association with the Congress. He announced his retirement from active politics in January 2023.

1.2 Awards:

- Conferred with the Padma Vibhushan (2023).

2. Zakir Hussain

- **Birth: March 9, 1951 (Mumbai)**
- **Death: December 15, 2024 (San Francisco)**
- **Full Name:** Zakir Hussain Allarakha Qureshi
- **Identity:** Renowned Tabla Maestro
- **Education:** Primary and secondary schooling at St. Michael's High School, Mahim; Graduation from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai.

2.1 Awards & Honors:

- Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1990)
- Four Grammy Awards
- Indo-American Award (1990)
- National Heritage Fellowship, USA (1999)
- Padma Shri (1988), Padma Bhushan (2002), Padma Vibhushan (2023)
- Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (2018)
- Kalidas Samman, Government of Madhya Pradesh (2006)
- Lifetime Achievement Award by Konark Natya Mandap, Odisha (2012)
- **Cause of Death:** He passed away due to 'Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis', a lung-related ailment that weakens the body.

2.2 Musical Journey:

- He learned music under the guidance of his father, the legendary tabla player Ustad Alla Rakha.
- Performed his first public tabla recital in 1963 at the age of 12.
- Started his international career in 1970.
- Co-founded the group 'Shanti' (1970) with Sarod player Aashish Khan and the iconic world music group 'Shakti' (1975) with British guitarist John McLaughlin and violinist L. Shankar.
- Composed the music for the opening of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.
- Served as a Professor (2005–06) and Visiting Professor (2007) of Indian Classical Music at Stanford University.
- **Personal Life:** Married Italian-American Kathak dancer Antonia Minnecola in 1978.
- **Famous Albums:** Living in the Material World (First album), Face to Face (1977), Planet Drum (1991), Soundscapes (1993), The Tree of Rhythm (2002), and As We Speak (2023).

3. Prof. Amiya Kumar Bagchi

- **Prof. Amiya Kumar Bagchi, globally renowned as an expert in political economy and the history of economics, passed away on November 28, 2024.**
- **Early Life:** Born in 1936 in a village in Murshidabad, West Bengal.
- **Education:** * After having to leave a college for raising his voice against injustice, he enrolled at Presidency University in Calcutta, which offered a relatively more liberal environment.
- For further studies, he went to Cambridge University in Britain and joined Trinity College.
- In 1963, he obtained his PhD from the same university on the subject of "Private Investment in India."

3.1 Academic Career:

- After completing his education, he returned to Calcutta and joined Presidency College as a professor.
- He also spent time teaching at Cambridge and Cornell University in the United States.

3.2 Institutional Contributions:

- Along with Professor Tapas Majumdar, he founded the "Center for Economic Studies." This institution has shaped generations of economists who have influenced the country's economy.
- In 2002, he established the "Institute of Development Studies," Kolkata. He served as the Director of this institute until his retirement in 2012.

3.3 Public & Professional Roles:

- He was a member of the "Bengal Planning Board" until 2005, which was established to submit a report on the government's financial status for the Tenth Five-Year Plan.
- Until 1997, he served as the official historian of the State Bank of India.
- Awards: He was honored with the Padma Shri in 2005.
- Bibliography (Notable Books): * Private Investment in India (1900-1939)
- Deindustrialization in Colonial India
- Dialectics of Development and Underdevelopment (1972)
- Perilous Passage, etc.

One liners :

1. Political and Constitutional

- Parliament Session: YSR Congress MP Madila Gurumoorthy has demanded that two sessions of Parliament be held in South India.
- Article 85 of the Constitution: The President has the power to summon a session of Parliament at any place they deem fit.
- Impeachment of Judge: A resolution for the impeachment of Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav of the Allahabad High Court was submitted in the Rajya Sabha.
- First Constitution Museum: Inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla at Sonapat, Haryana (O.P. Jindal Global University).
- Constitution Translation: President Murmu unveiled the Sanskrit and Maithili translations of the Indian Constitution.
- Classical Languages: In 2024, five languages—Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali—received the status of Classical Languages.

2. Global and International

- G20 Summit 2024: The 19th summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Theme: 'Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet'.
- New G20 Member: The African Union participated as a full member for the first time.
- Next G20: The 20th Summit will be held in South Africa in 2025.
- Fastest Growing Economy: India has emerged as the fastest-growing economy among G20 nations with a 7% GDP growth rate.
- Namibia: Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah has become the first female President of Namibia.
- UN CND: India has been appointed as the Chair of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (68th session) for the first time.

3. Maharashtra Special

- Chief Minister: Devendra Fadnavis took the oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for the third time (18th Chief Minister).
- Deputy Chief Ministers: Ajit Pawar (for the 6th time) and Eknath Shinde took the oath as Deputy Chief Ministers.
- Seabed Cleaning: India's first seabed cleaning drive was implemented at Malvan in Sindhudurg.
- Organic Production: Maharashtra ranks third in the country in organic food production (Karnataka ranks first).

4. Economy and Government Schemes

- New RBI Governor: Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed as the 26th Governor (effective from December 11, 2024).
- FDI Inflow: India's total FDI surpassed \$1 trillion between April 2000 and September 2024.
- Vima Sakhi Scheme: A stipend-based scheme launched by LIC to provide employment to 2 lakh women.
- One Nation One Subscription: A scheme approved to provide researchers access to over 13,000 international journals.
- Network Readiness Index 2024: India ranked 49th (an improvement of 11 positions).

5. Science, Technology, and Environment

- 57th Tiger Reserve: The Ratapani Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh became the 57th tiger reserve in the country.
- GSAT-N2 Launch: This ISRO satellite was launched using the American SpaceX (Falcon-9) rocket.
- Hypersonic Missile: India successfully tested its first long-range hypersonic missile with a range of 1,500 km.
- CCPI 2025: India ranks 10th in the Climate Change Performance Index.
- DHARINI: The world's first 3D fetal brain atlas developed by IIT Madras.

6. Awards and Sports

- Chess World Champion: 18-year-old D. Gukesh became the youngest World Chess Champion in history.
- ICC Chairman: Jay Shah became the youngest Chairman of the ICC, effective December 1, 2024.
- Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2023: Awarded to Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad.
- Champions of the Earth: Veteran environmentalist Dr. Madhav Gadgil was announced as the recipient of the UN Lifetime Achievement Award.
- TIME Person of the Year 2024: Donald Trump was selected .



PRAYAAS

UPSC 1.5 YEAR INTEGRATED BATCH 2027

From NCERT to Rank – One Integrated Journey

01



NCERT FOUNDATION PHASE

January – June

Objective: Build rock-solid conceptual clarity from scratch

Key Features:

- Complete **NCERT** Coverage (Beginner Friendly)
- Hard Copy Comprehensive **NCERT Notes** available in Marathi & English medium (Exam-oriented)
- 9 **descriptive** & 9 **objective** test
- **Subject-wise** MCQ Tests + Descriptive Tests
- **Personal Mentor** Assigned to every student
- Focus on concept building + answer orientation
- Ideal for **freshers & repeaters**
- **One to One** Evaluation & Discussion

02



MAINS ENRICHMENT PHASE

June – December

Objective: From syllabus mastery to answer writing excellence

Key Features:

- **Complete GS** Syllabus (Basic to Advanced)
- Faculty with 7+ years **real UPSC mains experience**
- **Mains-Specific** Comprehensive Notes
- Daily **Answer Writing Practice**
- Personalized **Mentorship & Evaluation**
- Structured approach for GS I-IV + Essay
- Continuous **Current Affairs Integration**

03



PRELIMS DOMINATION PHASE

January – Prelims 2027

Objective: Maximize accuracy, speed & exam temperament

Key Features:

- **Daily Rapid Revision** Crash Course Lectures
- Prelims-Oriented **Short Notes**
- **10,000+** MCQs Practice
- **Weekly Full-Length** Prelims Tests
- Tests conducted in **Actual Exam Environment** (Schools & Colleges)
- Dedicated **Current Affairs for Prelims**

ADDITIONAL POWER FEATURES

- ✓ **Personal Mentor** for Entire 1.5 Years
- ✓ **Special Current Affairs Classes** (Mains + Prelims)
- ✓ **Marathi & English Medium** – Separate Batches
- ✓ **Integrated GS + Test Series + Mentorship**
- ✓ **Daily Answer Writing** (Mains Phase)
- ✓ **UPSC Focused Strategy**
- ✓ **Online + Offline** mode available

ADMISSIONS OPEN

LIMITED SEATS