

EXCLUSIVE ANDHRA PRADESH CURRENT AFFAIRS



Andhra Pradesh Complete state specific current affairs covered from
Jan 1st to Sep 20th 2026

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Amaravati at the Crossroads: Seeking Statutory Shield for Andhra's Capital Dream

Context:

Recently, the Andhra Pradesh government formally requested the Union Government to enact a Central Law or amend the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act (APRA), 2014. The objective is to grant "statutory protection" to Amaravati as the sole capital of Andhra Pradesh, thereby preventing future state governments from altering the capital city status arbitrarily (as seen in the "Three Capitals" proposal of the previous regime).

Key Highlights:

- **The Demand for "Sovereign Guarantee":**
 - ✓ **Why now?** With the 10-year period of Hyderabad as the common capital ending in June 2024, Amaravati is the de-facto capital. However, to ensure investor confidence and protecting the interests of farmers who surrendered land, the State wants the Centre to legally lock Amaravati as the permanent capital.
 - ✓ **Mechanism:** The State has requested an amendment to Section 5 or 6 of the APRA, 2014, to explicitly mention Amaravati as the capital, rather than leaving it to the discretion of the State Assembly.
- **Protecting the Land Pooling Scheme (LPS):**
 - ✓ Over 33,000 acres of land were given by farmers under the Land Pooling Scheme.
 - ✓ A Central Law would act as a safety net, ensuring that the "Master Plan" of Amaravati cannot be scrapped by a change in political leadership, treating the agreement between farmers and the government as a binding statutory contract protected by Parliament.
- **Federalism vs. Stability:**
 - ✓ While deciding a capital is typically a State Subject, the AP government argues that since the capital's foundation was laid by the Prime Minister and funded partly by the Centre under the Reorganisation Act, the Centre has a stake and responsibility in its stability.

2. Innovation in Governance: 6 District Models Ready for Statewide Scale-Up in AP

Context:

As Andhra Pradesh enters 2026, the state government has identified six pilot projects spearheaded by District Collectors in 2025 as successful templates for statewide implementation. These initiatives range from tribal education and digital land records to social rehabilitation, marking a shift towards decentralized, innovation-driven governance.

Key Highlights: The 6 District Models

1. ASR District: 'Super 50 Inspiration Engine' (Education)

- **Initiative:** Under the 'Nirman' programme, Collector Dinesh Kumar introduced a mentoring platform for Class X students in tribal Ashram schools.
- **Methodology:** Combines app-based assessments with the "Teaching at the Right Level" (TaRL) methodology.
- **Impact:** Strengthened academic foundations in Telugu, English, and Mathematics for nearly 90,000 tribal students.

2. Parvathipuram Manyam: 'Mustabu' (Health & Hygiene)

- **Initiative:** A behavioral change program where students must wash hands and groom themselves before entering classrooms.
- **Outcome:** Improved school hygiene, student confidence, and reduced illness-related absenteeism.
- **Scale-up:** The CM announced plans to extend this to 7.9 million students across the state, potentially influencing 2 crore family members.

3. Eluru: Project 'Marpu' (Social Rehabilitation)

- **Target:** Families engaged in illicit liquor brewing (ID liquor).
- **Approach:** Instead of punitive arrests, the project focuses on rehabilitation and livelihood support.
- **Success:** Implemented in 140 villages, helping families transition to micro-entrepreneurship. The CM cited this as a model to tackle drug abuse as well.

4. Nellore: 'Champion Farmers' (Agriculture)

- **Challenge:** Monoculture (80% farmers dependent on Paddy).
- **Solution:** Identified one "Champion Farmer" in each of the 727 Gram Panchayats to act as a role model for Crop Diversification.
- **Tech Integration:** Use of Drones for spraying and promotion of alternative crops to reduce paddy acreage.

5. Kadapa: 'Smart Kitchens' (Nutrition)

- **Model:** Establishing Smart Kitchens equipped with 3 MW Solar Power Plants and Biogas facilities to provide hot, nutritious meals.
- **Sustainability:** Integrates produce from Natural Farming with robust certification.
- **Status:** 5 kitchens operational; plans for 33 total. Union Ministry of Education has noted it for national relevance.

6. Anantapur: AI-Driven Revenue Records (E-Governance)

- **Innovation:** Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to digitize land records and resolve disputes related to 22A lands (prohibited list).
- **Features:** Creation of a Survey Number Library and cloud-based storage to prevent data manipulation.
- **Benefit:** Ensures transparency and solves long-pending land litigation.

Role of District Collector

The Collector is the pivot of district administration. These initiatives highlight the "**Developmental Role**" of the Collector (unlike the traditional regulatory revenue role)

Established by Warren Hastings in 1772

Constitutional Provisions (DPSP)

Article 47: Duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health (Relates to Mustabu & Smart Kitchens)

Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests of SCs, STs, and other weaker sections (Relates to Nirman in ASR District)

E-Governance (Smart Governance)

The Anantapur Initiative: A Classic Example of **SMART** Governance (Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent)

Aligns with Digital India Mission's Pillar of "**e-Kranti**"

Electronic Delivery
Digital India
Power To Empower

3. Judicial Transitions: Justice Lisa Gill Proposed as Next Chief Justice of AP High Court

Context:

Recently, the Supreme Court Collegium recommended the transfer of Justice Lisa Gill from the Punjab & Haryana High Court to the Andhra Pradesh High Court, proposing her as its next Chief Justice. Concurrently, the Collegium introduced a significant administrative policy shift regarding the timeline of such transfers.

I. Key Highlights of the Development

- **The AP Appointment:** Justice Lisa Gill has been formally recommended to take over the helm of the AP High Court as soon as the upcoming vacancy arises.
- **New 'Advance Transfer' Policy:** The SC Collegium laid down a new policy decision: judges proposed to become High Court Chief Justices will now be transferred to their new High Court two months in advance of the actual vacancy.
- **Administrative Rationale:** This two-month buffer is designed to strengthen administrative efficiency. It gives the incoming Chief Justice ample time to become thoroughly conversant with the specific affairs, local legal nuances, and administrative machinery of the new High Court before formally assuming the top office.
- **Other High-Profile Appointments:** In the same meeting, the Collegium recommended Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari as the next Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, ensuring seamless transitions across major state judiciaries.

II. Governance and Administrative Dimensions:

- **Ensuring Institutional Continuity:** High Courts often suffer from administrative paralysis when an incumbent Chief Justice retires and a new one immediately takes over without prior knowledge of the local court's dynamics. The advance transfer policy ensures institutional continuity and reduces the learning curve.
- **Collegium Transparency:** Formalizing and publicly stating the rationale for transfer timelines is a step toward making the often-criticized Collegium system slightly more predictable and administratively sound.

III. Constitutional & Legal Framework:

- **Appointment of HC Chief Justice: Article 217:** States that the Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the Governor of the respective State.
- **Transfer of HC Judges: Article 222:** Empowers the President, after mandatory consultation with the CJI, to transfer a judge from one High Court to any other High Court in India.
- **The Collegium System:** A system for the appointment and transfer of judges that is not mentioned in the Constitution. It evolved purely through Supreme Court judgments (the First, Second, and Third Judges Cases). The HC Collegium for appointing a judge consists of the CJI and the two senior-most SC judges.
- **Memorandum of Procedure (MoP):** The official executive rulebook, agreed upon by both the Government of India and the Judiciary, which lays down the step-by-step procedure for appointing and transferring judges.

4. Digitizing Transparency: The Push for an Online RTI Portal in Andhra Pradesh

Context:

Recently, political representations were formally submitted to the Andhra Pradesh State Information Commission (APSIC) urging the immediate introduction of an online portal for filing Right to Information (RTI) applications, highlighting the state's lag in digital governance in this specific sector.

I. Key Highlights of the Issue:

- **The Current Bottleneck:** At present, citizens in Andhra Pradesh seeking information under the RTI Act are restricted to filing their requests either physically in person or via postal mail.
- **The Digital Irony:** Despite Andhra Pradesh's historical push to brand itself as a technologically advanced, IT-forward state, it remains one of the few major states in India that has not integrated an online RTI filing system on its Information Commission website.

- **Target Beneficiaries:** Transitioning to a digital system would primarily empower the younger demographic and students.
 - It would critically assist senior citizens, physically challenged individuals, and those living in remote rural areas who cannot easily travel to government offices.

II. Governance and Administrative Dimensions:

- **Frictionless Transparency:** E-governance tools drastically reduce the bureaucratic friction and financial cost associated with seeking public information (e.g., eliminating postal delays and the risk of physical applications being "lost in transit").
- **Enhanced Tracking and Accountability:** An online portal inherently creates a digital paper trail. It allows citizens to track the real-time status of their applications and simplifies the process of filing First and Second Appeals if the Public Information Officer (PIO) fails to respond within the mandated 30 days.

III. Statutory Framework of the RTI:

Dimension	Statutory / Legal Relevance
Right to Information Act, 2005	A landmark legislation enacted to operationalize the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression (Article 19(1)(a)), ensuring citizens can secure access to information under the control of public authorities.
Section 6(1) of the RTI Act	Explicitly provides the legal backing for digital portals. It states that a person desiring to obtain information shall make a request in writing or "through electronic means" in English, Hindi, or the official language of the area.
State Information Commission	Constituted under Section 15 of the RTI Act. The APSIC acts as the apex appellate authority in the state for RTI matters. The Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners are appointed by the Governor.
E-Governance Policy	Aligns with the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), which aims to make all government services accessible to the common man in their locality through common service delivery outlets, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and reliability.

5. Competitive Federalism: NITI Aayog's Blueprint for District-Led Growth

Context:

During a recent regional seminar held in Visakhapatnam, NITI Aayog highlighted that "Healthy Competition" among districts serves as the main catalyst for swift rural development. By shifting from centralized planning to district-specific objectives, the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) and the following Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) are transforming the approach India takes to address regional disparities.

I. The Three Pillars: Convergence, Collaboration, and Competition

The effectiveness of these programs is founded on a distinctive cooperative framework that harmonizes the Union government, State governments, and local entities.

- **Convergence:** The integration of various Central and State initiatives to prevent the redundancy of efforts.
- **Collaboration:** Coordinated actions among "Prabhari" officers (at the central level), District Collectors, and local communities.
- **Competition:** Implementing a "Delta Ranking" system to cultivate a sense of healthy competition among districts, motivating them to enhance their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within brief timeframes.

II. Success Stories from Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh has positioned itself as a leader in numerous vital sectors through this initiative:

- **Anganwadi Transformation:** An extraordinary accomplishment witnessed the increase of drinking water facilities in Anganwadi centers from a mere 3.7% to a full 100%.
- **Regional Leadership:** The Kadapa district achieved first place in the "Sampoornata Abhiyan" in September 2025, showcasing effective implementation at the grassroots level.
- **Manyam District:** Acknowledged for its stringent and successful malaria control measures in challenging forest environments.

III. Inter-State Best Practices: A South Indian Perspective

The seminar acted as a venue for disseminating effective models that can be duplicated throughout the southern states:

- **Tamil Nadu:** Targeted strategies aimed at decreasing malnutrition and vigorous efforts to eradicate Tuberculosis (TB).
- **Telangana:** Notable advancements and uniform enhancements in the educational field.
- **Karnataka & Kerala:** Commended for their maternal health programs and innovative community-driven mental health initiatives, respectively.

The transition from Aspirational Districts to Aspirational Blocks signals a move toward 'Hyper-Local Governance.' In Andhra Pradesh, the success in Kadapa and Manyam proves that when data-driven targets are combined with local leadership, backwardness is not a permanent condition but a solvable administrative challenge.

6. Amaravati Gains Statutory Status: The A.P. Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026 Context:

The Lok Sabha has recently enacted the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which provides formal acknowledgment of Amaravati as the exclusive and permanent capital of the state. This significant legislative action officially brings to a close the decade-long arrangement of sharing the capital with Hyderabad and resolves the extended administrative ambiguity within the state.

- **Background & Legislative Context:**
 - ✓ A.P. Reorganisation Act, 2014: Section 5 initially identified Hyderabad as a provisional common capital for a duration not exceeding 10 years.
 - ✓ Conclusion of Uncertainty: The recent Bill effectively nullifies the 2020 initiative that proposed a decentralised three-capital framework (Executive in Visakhapatnam, Legislative in Amaravati, and Judicial in Kurnool).
 - ✓ The 2026 Amendment: Officially integrates Amaravati into the 2014 Act as the designated capital, providing it with legal support retroactively effective from June 2, 2024.
 - ✓ State Approval: The legislative action is in accordance with a specific resolution adopted by the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on March 28, 2026.
- **Economic & Infrastructure Impetus:**
 - ✓ Investment Revival: The Bill aims to create a stable policy environment, which is anticipated to facilitate substantial infrastructure investments projected at ₹56,000 crore.
 - ✓ Global Funding: Accelerates the implementation of 91 key developmental initiatives, utilizing financial backing from organizations such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
 - ✓ Growth Engine: Proposes the establishment of a greenfield city as a hub of international standards, which is expected to significantly enhance employment opportunities and industrial development throughout the Vijayawada-Guntur area.

- **Socio-Political Significance:**

- ✓ Honouring the Land Pooling Scheme (LPS): Acknowledges the significant civic initiative in which more than 29,000 farmers willingly relinquished 34,000 acres of their ancestral land for the development of the capital.
- ✓ Administrative Synergy: Creates a consolidated governance structure, enhancing collaboration among the Secretariat, the Legislative Assembly, and the High Court.
- ✓ Federal Dynamics: Illustrates a remarkable case of the Union Parliament utilizing Article 3 and 4 provisions to determine a particular site as the State capital.

- **Challenges & Way Forward:**

- ✓ Fiscal Responsibility: Establishing a large-scale greenfield project from inception necessitates ongoing, substantial capital investment throughout an extended development phase.
- ✓ Equitable Regional Growth: The state government is required to adopt concurrent strategies to mitigate regional inequalities, guaranteeing that both Rayalaseema and North Coastal Andhra experience fair economic advancement.

7. Justice Lisa Gill: First Woman Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court

Context:

Justice Lisa Gill has been formally inaugurated as the inaugural female Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court. Prior to the ceremony in Vijayawada, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu met with the Chief Justice-designate to convey his official congratulations on this significant judicial achievement.

- **Profile & Historic Significance:**

- ✓ Pioneering Position: She is the inaugural female leader of the Andhra Pradesh High Court since its establishment.
- ✓ Prior Experience: She held the esteemed position of judge at the Punjab and Haryana High Court prior to her promotion.
- ✓ Judicial Achievement: Her appointment is regarded as a significant advancement for gender representation within the state's higher judiciary.



- **Appointment Process of a High Court Chief Justice:**

- ✓ Constitutional Provision: According to Article 217, the Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President of India.
- ✓ The Collegium System: The Supreme Court Collegium, which includes the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and two of the most senior judges, makes the recommendation.
- ✓ Consultation Process: Prior to the appointment, the President seeks the counsel of the CJI and the Governor of the relevant state.
- ✓ Transfer/Elevation: This procedure frequently entails the transfer of senior judges from different High Courts to promote national integration and uphold merit.

- **Qualifications & Oath:**

- ✓ Eligibility: Candidates must be citizens of India and possess a minimum of 10 years of experience either in a judicial capacity or as an advocate in a High Court.
- ✓ Administering Oath: According to Article 219, the oath of office is administered by the Governor of the State or an individual designated by them.
- ✓ Tenure: The individual remains in office until reaching the age of 62 years.
- ✓ Resignation: The Chief Justice has the option to resign by submitting a written notice to the President of India.

Key Functions & Powers:

- ✓ Administrative Head: Functions as the 'Master of Roster,' determining the distribution of cases and the formation of benches.
- ✓ Supervisory Role: In accordance with Article 227, the Chief Justice oversees all subordinate courts and tribunals operating within the state's jurisdiction.

- ✓ Consultative Power: The Governor seeks the Chief Justice's advice concerning the appointment of District Judges.

8. Andhra Pradesh: India's Leader in Panchayati Raj Reforms and Rural Governance Context:

Andhra Pradesh has secured the top position in the national Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) rankings, ascending from the 24th place in a mere two years. This remarkable transformation is attributed to extensive administrative reorganization and the elevation of more than 10,000 Panchayati Raj personnel to enhance rural effectiveness.

- **National Ranking & RGSA Achievement:**
 - ✓ **Performance Leap:** Elevated from the 24th position to the 1st position in India as recognized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR).
 - ✓ **RGSA Focus:** Commitment to excellence within the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, a program dedicated to the "Capacity Building & Training" of elected officials.
 - ✓ **SDG Localization:** Achievements in adapting the 9 themes of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the local context at the village level.
 - ✓ **Digital Governance:** Outstanding performance in the utilization of the e-Gram Swaraj portal and the real-time oversight of rural assets.
- **Key Administrative Reforms:**
 - ✓ **Human Resource Enhancement:** A historic advancement involving the promotion of over 10,000 personnel (including Secretaries, VROs, etc.) to foster a motivated workforce.
 - ✓ **Decentralized Authority:** Successful execution of the three-tier governance structure (Gram Panchayat, Mandal Parishad, Zilla Parishad).
 - ✓ **Village Secretariats:** The "Grama Sachivalayam" framework recognized as a significant driver for providing more than 500 services directly to residents.
 - ✓ **Infrastructure Development:** Unprecedented completion rates of Gram Panchayat facilities, digital libraries, and CC roads in rural regions.
- **Constitutional & Policy Linkages:**
 - ✓ **73rd Amendment Act:** The success of Andhra Pradesh is in harmony with the fundamental principles of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992).
 - ✓ **Article 243-G:** The effective transfer of powers, authority, and responsibilities to the Panchayats.
 - ✓ **State Election Commission:** Guaranteeing the prompt execution of local body elections to uphold democratic decentralization.
 - ✓ **Social Audit:** Enhancing transparency via consistent social audits of the MGNREGS and various welfare initiatives.

9. Andhra Pradesh Secures 2nd Spot in National Panchayat Awards-2025 Context:

Context:

Andhra Pradesh has emerged as a top-performing state in rural governance by securing five National Panchayat Awards in 2025. Announced by the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, this achievement highlights the state's strong commitment to decentralized administration, good governance, and sustainable rural development.

Key Highlights:

- National Standing: AP tied with Odisha for the 2nd position nationwide, trailing only behind Karnataka.
- Nanaji Deshmukh Puraskar: Kuppam Block Panchayat (Chittoor) was ranked India's 3rd best block, winning Rs 1.5 crore.
- Good Governance: Srungavaram GP (Visakhapatnam) secured the 1st rank nationally, earning Rs 1 crore.

- Women-Friendly Panchayat: Bokkasam Palem GP (Tirupati) achieved the 1st rank, receiving Rs 1 crore.
- Poverty-Free & Livelihoods: Chemmullapalli GP (YSR district) won the 2nd rank along with a Rs 75 lakh prize.
- Infrastructure: Gundamala GP (Prakasam) took the 3rd rank for self-sufficient infrastructure (Rs 25 lakh).

Constitutional & Historical Background

- 73rd Amendment Act: Constitutionalized Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India in 1992.
- National Panchayati Raj Day: Celebrated annually on April 24 to commemorate the enforcement of the 73rd Amendment.
- Historical Context: AP was the second state in India (after Rajasthan) to establish the Panchayati Raj system in 1959.
- Constitutional Provision: Article 40 (DPSP) directs the State to organize village panchayats and endow them with power.
- Award Namesakes: The awards honor social reformers Nanaji Deshmukh and Deen Dayal Upadhyay for their rural development visions.

10. Daughters' Coparcenary Rights: AP High Court Ruling

Context:

The Andhra Pradesh High Court has definitively reaffirmed that daughters acquire equal coparcenary rights in their father's ancestral property by birth, enforcing the mandate of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005.

Key Highlights of the Judgement:

- Equal Share Granted: The Court modified an older decree, elevating a daughter's share to equal that of her brother.
- Father's Survival Irrelevant: The father does not need to be alive when the 2005 amendment was enacted.
- Crucial Cut-off Date: The sole legal prerequisite is that the daughter must be alive on September 9, 2005.
- Judicial Flexibility: Courts hold the power to modify preliminary partition decrees if new legal changes occur before the final decree.

Static Relevance & Core Concepts:

- Hindu Succession Act, 1956: Originally, the traditional Mitakshara law restricted joint family property (coparcenary) rights exclusively to the male lineage.
- 2005 Amendment (Section 6): Dismantled this patriarchal framework by conferring coparcenary status on daughters by birth.
- Vineeta Sharma v. Rakesh Sharma (2020): The landmark Supreme Court verdict establishing that the 2005 amendment is retroactive in nature.
- Constitutional Alignment: Upholds Article 14 (Equality before Law) and Article 15 (Prohibition of discrimination based on sex).
- Economic Empowerment: Independent property ownership is a foundational pillar for women's financial security and social standing.

This progressive ruling ensures that procedural delays in partition suits cannot be weaponized to deny women their substantive property rights enshrined under the 2005 amendment.

11. Right to Privacy Cannot Be Used to Evade Law: Andhra Pradesh High Court (Indian Express)

Context:

- The Andhra Pradesh High Court ruled that the right to privacy cannot be invoked as a shield to evade the law in cases involving alleged forgery and fraud.

- The Court directed the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to share Aadhaar and biometric information with the investigating agency under judicial supervision in a land fraud case.

Constitutional & Legal Framework

- Article 21: The Right to Privacy is a fundamental right, recognised by the Supreme Court in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017).
- Article 300A: Guarantees that no person shall be deprived of property except by authority of law.
- Section 33(1) of the Aadhaar Act, 2016: Permits disclosure of Aadhaar-related information pursuant to an order of a court not inferior to that of a High Court, subject to prescribed safeguards.
- Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016: Regulates the collection, storage and use of Aadhaar data while safeguarding individual privacy.

Key Observations of the Court

- The right to privacy is not absolute and may be subject to reasonable restrictions in accordance with law.
- Section 33(1) does not impose a blanket prohibition on disclosure of Aadhaar-related information.
- Courts may direct disclosure where it is necessary for a fair investigation, while ensuring adequate safeguards against misuse.
- Privacy protections should not obstruct the investigation and prosecution of offences such as forgery, impersonation and fraud.

Significance

- Reinforces the principle that privacy and the administration of justice must be balanced.
- Clarifies the legal scope of disclosure of Aadhaar information in criminal investigations.
- Strengthens the fight against identity theft, document forgery and property fraud while preserving judicial oversight.

Challenges

- Balancing the Right to Privacy with the need for effective criminal investigation.
- Preventing misuse or unauthorised disclosure of sensitive Aadhaar and biometric data.
- Strengthening cybersecurity to protect personal data from breaches and identity theft.
- Ensuring uniform judicial standards for permitting disclosure under exceptional circumstances.
- Addressing delays in investigation where access to digital identity records is essential.

Way Forward

- Ensure disclosure of Aadhaar-related information only through judicial oversight and in accordance with the principle of proportionality laid down in the Puttaswamy judgment.
- Strengthen data protection, encryption and accountability mechanisms under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 and the Aadhaar Act, 2016.
- Develop clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for law enforcement agencies to access biometric information in exceptional cases.
- Enhance coordination among UIDAI, investigating agencies and the judiciary to facilitate lawful investigations while protecting individual rights.
- Promote public awareness on safeguarding Aadhaar credentials and reporting identity theft promptly.

12. 34% RESERVATION FOR BCs IN LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS - *The Indian Express*.

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh Government announced increased reservation for **Backward Classes in local bodies** in August 2026.

The announcement provided:

- **34% reservation in rural local bodies**
- **Around 33.33% in urban local bodies.**

Key Features

This measure concerns political representation in:

- Gram Panchayats
- Mandal-level bodies
- Zilla-level bodies
- Urban local bodies

Significance

BC reservation is connected with:

- Political empowerment
- Social justice
- Decentralisation
- Representation in local governance

It is particularly important because local governments are the institutions closest to citizens.

Constitutional Background

Important provisions:

- **Article 243D** → Reservation in Panchayats.
- **Article 243T** → Reservation in Municipalities.
- State legislation determines several aspects of local-body reservation.

Challenges

- Constitutional limits and judicial scrutiny.
- Requirement of empirical data.
- Balancing different categories of reservation.
- Delimitation and electoral-roll issues.

The issue subsequently attracted judicial scrutiny regarding the empirical basis for the 34% figure.

Way Forward

- Evidence-based reservation.
- Transparent socio-economic data.
- Periodic review.
- Greater political participation of marginalised communities.

13. DIRECT ELECTION OF MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL CHAIRMEN- Deccan Chronicle

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed the **Andhra Pradesh Municipal Laws (Fourth Amendment) Bill, 2026** in August.

The Bill seeks to restore **direct election of Mayors of Municipal Corporations and Chairpersons of Municipalities/Nagar Panchayats.**

Key Features

Under the proposed system:

Voters directly elect:

- Mayor
- Municipal Chairperson for a **Five-year term.**

The Bill also rationalises deputy positions:

- One Deputy Mayor in a Municipal Corporation.
- One Vice-Chairperson in a Municipality/Nagar Panchayat.

Significance

Direct election can make the municipal executive leadership more directly accountable to voters.

It raises important questions regarding:

Political accountability + urban governance + decentralisation

Challenges

- Possible tension between directly elected mayors and councillors.

- Coordination with municipal administration.
- Party politics at local level.
- Concentration of executive authority.

Way Forward

- Clearly define mayoral powers.
- Strengthen municipal finances.
- Professionalise municipal administration.
- Establish measurable urban-service indicators.

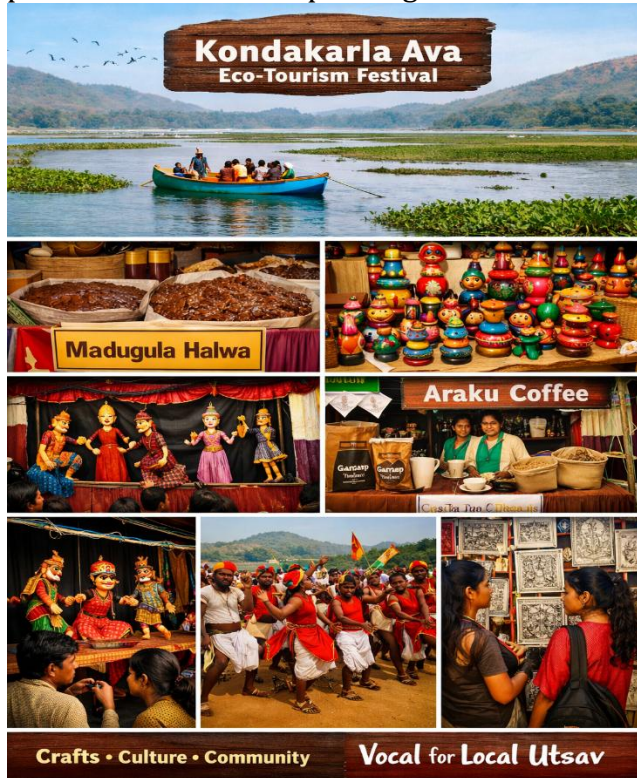


HISTORY AND CULTURE

1. Anakapalli Utsav 2026: A Grand Showcase of Uttarandhra's Culture & Tourism

Context:

Recently, the Anakapalli Utsav was celebrated on a grand scale for the first time since the district's formation. Inaugurated by AP Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, the two-day festival aimed to spotlight the unique cultural heritage, indigenous crafts, and eco-tourism potential of the Anakapalli region.



Key Highlights of the Utsav

- **Focus on Eco-Tourism: Kondakarla Ava**
 - ✓ **The Venue:** A major attraction of the festival was Kondakarla Ava, a famous freshwater wetland and bird sanctuary.
 - ✓ **Tourism Potential:** Officials highlighted Kondakarla Ava as the "Second Largest Natural Freshwater Lake" in the state (after Kolleru).
 - ✓ **Development Plans:** The government announced plans to develop the lake and district reservoirs into international eco-tourism destinations, introducing boating facilities to boost local employment.
- **"Vocal for Local":**
 - ✓ **Promoting Indigenous Crafts** The Utsav served as a platform for "Creative Tourism," showcasing products central to the region's economy:
 - ✓ **Etikoppaka Toys:** Displaying the famous GI-tagged lacquer toys made from soft 'Ankudu' wood.
 - ✓ **Madugula Halwa:** Promoting the district's signature sweet, known for its distinct wheat-milk preparation.
 - ✓ **Araku Coffee:** Highlighting the tribal organic coffee brands from the neighboring agency areas.
- **Cultural Vibrancy:**
 - ✓ **Folk Arts:** The event revived traditional art forms including Puppet Shows and Folk Dances (like Tappeta Gullu).
 - ✓ **Tribal Art:** Special stalls displayed Savara paintings, a tribal art form indigenous to the North Coastal Andhra region.

- ✓ **Participation:** It saw active participation from students and the general public, fostering a sense of ownership over local heritage.

2. Unearthing History: 14th-Century Inscription of Naga Chief Annadeva Found in Palnadu Context:

Recently, a significant historical discovery was made in Ravvaram village, Nujendla Mandal of Palnadu district. A 14th-century inscription written in Telugu was found on a hillock, offering new evidence regarding the local rulers of that era.



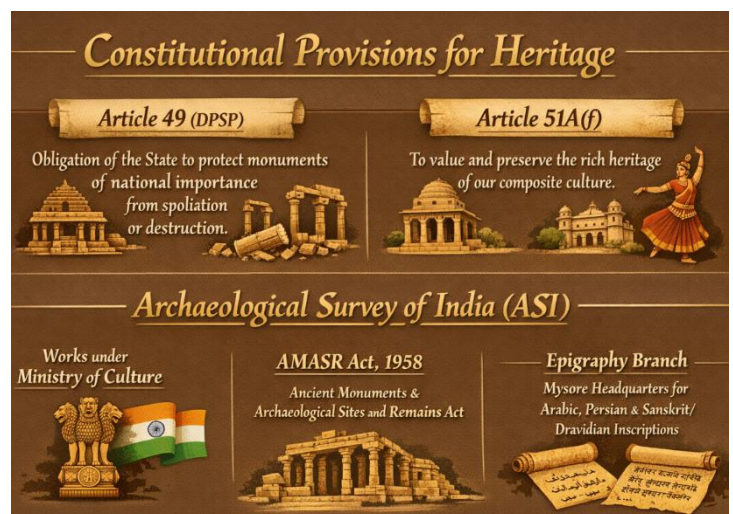
Key Highlights of the Discovery

- **The Inscription Details:**

- ✓ **Location:** The inscription was found engraved on a slab on Gurunathesvaruni Konda (hillock).
- ✓ **Date:** It dates back to Saka 1314, specifically the cyclic year Prajapati, Asvija Suddha 3 (Tritiya). This corresponds to October 1, 1391 CE.
- ✓ **Language:** The script and language are Telugu, which was the court language and widely used for inscriptions during the post-Kakatiya period.

- **Historical Significance: Chief Annadeva**

- ✓ **The Ruler:** The inscription mentions Annadeva, described as a chief of the Naga Vamsa (Naga Lineage).
- ✓ **Verification:** The inscription was initially identified by local historian Thurimella Srinivasa Prasad and later deciphered and authenticated by K. Munirathnam Reddy, Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Mysore.
- ✓ **Importance:** This find helps reconstruct the local history of the Palnadu region, filling gaps about the feudatory chiefs who ruled semi-independently during the turbulent post-Kakatiya era.



- **The Era: Post-Kakatiya Period (14th Century)**

- ✓ **Timeline:** The year 1391 CE falls in the period after the fall of the Kakatiya Empire (1323 CE) and during the dominance of the Reddi Kingdom of Kondavidu (1325–1424 CE) and the rising Vijayanagara Empire.

- ✓ **Political Landscape:** The Palnadu region was a strategic buffer zone. It was often controlled by powerful local chieftains (like the Naga Vamsis) who acted as feudatories (Samantas) to the Reddi Kings or ruled independently during power vacuums.
- **The Naga Vamsa (Naga Lineage):**
 - ✓ **Origin:** The Naga Vamsis were local ruling families in the Andhra region (primarily Guntur, Palnadu, and Kurnool) who claimed descent from the mythical Naga race.
 - ✓ **Role:** They were often warrior clans. In AP History, we see references to Naga chiefs serving as generals or local administrators under the Kakatiyas and later the Reddis.
 - ✓ **Significance in Palnadu:** Palnadu has a rich history of local heroism (Battle of Palnadu – 12th Century). Discoveries like this inscription suggest that even two centuries after the famous battle, local Naga chiefs maintained authority in the region.

3. Unearthing Roots: 8th-Century Telugu Inscription Found in Prakasam

Context:

Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) identified a significant 8th-century CE Telugu inscription at the Pithikesvara Swamy temple in Pitikayagulla village, Besthavari Peta mandal of the erstwhile Prakasam district. This discovery offers valuable insights into the engineering and linguistic history of the Renadu region.



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I. Key Highlights of the Discovery:

- **The Inscription Details:**
 - ✓ **Location:** Engraved on a slab pillar erected in front of the Pithikesvara Swamy temple.
 - ✓ **Time Period:** Dated to the 8th Century CE.
 - ✓ **Script:** Written in early Telugu script consisting of four lines.
 - ✓ **Decoded Text:** The text reads: "Svasti Sri Nandelu vari., Chensinavanthu prani., milli achari., Paasina nava katta."
- **Historical Significance:**
 - ✓ **Purpose:** The inscription records the construction of a "Nava Katta" (New Embankment or Bund).
 - ✓ **Key Figure:** The work is attributed to Pranamilli Achari, a sculptor of that era.
 - ✓ **Engineering Insight:** The mention of an embankment highlights the focus on water management and irrigation infrastructure during the medieval period in the dry Rayalaseema/Prakasam belt.
- **Preservation Appeal:**
 - ✓ Dr. K. Munirathnam Reddy (Director, Epigraphy, ASI Mysore), who decoded the text, emphasized the urgent need to protect such loose stone inscriptions which are often neglected but serve as primary sources for reconstructing regional history.

II. About The Dynasty: Renati Cholas

- **Region:** They ruled the Renadu region (modern-day Cuddapah, Annamayya, and parts of Kurnool/Prakasam districts).

- **Significance:** The Renati Cholas are celebrated in Andhra history as the first dynasty to use the Telugu language in their inscriptions instead of Sanskrit or Prakrit.
- **Key Fact:** This shift marked the beginning of Telugu as a language of administration and record-keeping.
- **Famous Inscription:** The Kalamalla Inscription (Kadapa district), issued by Erikal Mutthuraju (Dhanunjaya) around 575 CE, is considered the first Telugu inscription.

III. Evolution of Telugu Script:

- The script found in Pitikayagulla (8th Century) represents the transitional phase of the Telugu-Kannada script, evolving from the Brahmi script.
- By the 8th century, Telugu had developed distinct characteristics, separating itself from the common South Indian scripts.

4. Srikalahasti's Golden Stroke: Kalamkari Reimagines Rashtrapati Bhavan

Context:

In a significant move towards cultural decolonization, the war portraits from the colonial period in Rashtrapati Bhavan have been substituted with the lively and grounded stories depicted in Srikalahasti Kalamkari. A group of 21 traditional artists hailing from the Tirupati district has indelibly inscribed the cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh onto the walls of India's foremost residence, infusing a sense of "Indianness" into the hallways of Raisina Hill.



I. The Transformation: From War Imagery to Divine Heritage

The project encompassed the development of 17 large panels measuring 7x7 feet, along with two ornamental Yali arches. This change signifies a meaningful shift from British-era military representations to themes that embody the "Soul of India."

- **Key Themes:** The artworks prominently feature Sukha Maharshi, the Tree of Life, the Nandheeswara (Nandi), and the "Seven Steps" (Saptapadi).
- **The Srikalahasti Style:** In contrast to the block-printed Machilipatnam style, Srikalahasti Kalamkari is exclusively hand-painted with a "kalam" (pen), noted for its freehand artistry and a selection of natural, earthy dyes.
- **Antique Textures:** The artists employed particular antique finishing methods to ensure that the new hangings harmonized with the historic magnificence and architectural scale of the interiors of Rashtrapati Bhavan.

II. Institutional Recognition and Global Footprint:

The initiative, spearheaded by National Awardee M. Viswanath Reddy, garnered significant recognition:

- **Presidential Recognition:** President Droupadi Murmu made a personal visit to the workspace, engaging with the artists—including seven female artisans—underscoring the inclusive aspect of the craft's revival.
- **National Recognition:** A Ramayana-themed painting from this collection has been chosen for exhibition in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), further enhancing the prominence of Srikalahasti's traditional art.

- **Artistic Heritage:** The achievement of this project is rooted in a long-standing lineage of painters. The lead artist's family has previously held workshops in London and organized prestigious exhibitions, demonstrating the increasing global appeal of Kalamkari.

III. The Kalamkari Revival:

- **Cultural:** Replaces colonial narratives with indigenous Vedic and Puranic storytelling.
- **Artistic:** Showcases the "Pen-work" (Srikalahasti) technique over block printing.
- **Socio-Economic:** Empowerment of local artisans and women through national-level commissions.
- **Geographic:** Reinforces the Geographical Indication (GI) status of Srikalahasti (Andhra Pradesh).

IV. Technique Spotlight: Srikalahasti vs. Machilipatnam

For individuals engaged in the study of the crafts of Andhra Pradesh, it is crucial to differentiate between the two main centers of Kalamkari:

- **Srikalahasti:** This center is known for its hand-painted works, which predominantly depict religious scrolls, deities, and mythological stories. Its defining characteristics include fluid lines and hand-drawn borders.
- **Machilipatnam:** This center primarily employs vegetable-dyed wooden blocks for printing, which leads to the creation of more geometric and repetitive floral designs that are influenced by Persian artistic traditions.

The incorporation of Kalamkari into Rashtrapati Bhavan transcends mere interior decoration; it represents an 'Artistic Homecoming.' By substituting colonial art with GI-tagged crafts from Andhra Pradesh, the heritage of the state is now established as a fundamental element of India's national identity.

V. Key facts:

- **Lead Artist:** M. Viswanath Reddy (National Awardee, 2008).
- **Location of Origin:** Srikalahasti, Tirupati District, AP.
- **Material Used:** Hand-processed cotton cloth and natural mineral/vegetable dyes.
- **Key Achievement:** 17 large-scale panels completed in a record 15 days.

5. Saga of Sacrifice: 14th-Century Hero Stone Unearthed in Prakasam Context:



A significant artifact from medieval history has come to light in Vemavaram village, located in Prakasam district, where a hero stone inscription from the 14th century was recently uncovered. This stone, dated to Saka 1306 (1384 CE), acts as a lithic testament to bravery, chronicling the ultimate sacrifice made by local warriors during a time of considerable regional change.

I. The Inscription: A Record of Valor

The stone is part of the Veeragallu (Hero Stones) tradition, which was established to honor those who perished in combat or while safeguarding their community.

- **The Heroes:** The inscription commemorates three brothers—Annaya Veera, Tipurayya Veera, and Mummyya Veera—who were the sons of Bhokkana from the Veera Gotra.
- **The Act of Heroism:** The brothers met their demise while defending cattle from peril. In medieval Andhra, cattle thefts were common, and cattle represented a significant form of wealth; thus, their protection was regarded as a paramount duty, often resulting in the veneration of the deceased.

II. Epigraphical and Linguistic Significance:

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), specifically the Directorate of Epigraphy located in Mysore, has verified the authenticity of this discovery.

- **Script and Language:** The inscription is composed in Telugu, offering significant information for linguists who are examining the development of the Telugu script and its vocabulary in the 14th century.
- **Chronology:** The date corresponding to Saka 1306 coincides with the post-Kakatiya era, a period characterized by the important contributions of local chieftains and village-level heroes in upholding social stability.

III. Vemavaram Discovery:

- **Chronological:** Dated to 1384 CE (Late Medieval Period).
- **Socio-Economic:** Highlights the high value placed on cattle (Godhanam) in rural economies.
- **Cultural:** Evidence of the Veeragallu tradition in the Prakasam region.
- **Linguistic:** Shows the 14th-century transition of the Telugu language and characters.

IV. The "Veeragallu" Tradition in Andhra:

For those passionate about history, this finding contributes to the collection of hero stones located throughout the Deccan. These stones are typically categorized into three distinct panels:

- **Lower Panel:** Illustrates the hero in a moment of valor (for instance, combating raiders).
- **Middle Panel:** Depicts the hero being ascended to the heavens by celestial nymphs (Apsaras).
- **Top Panel:** Showcases the hero seated in front of a deity (commonly a Shiva Linga), representing everlasting tranquility.

The Vemavaram inscription serves as a 'social document' rather than merely a political one. It reveals that in 14th-century Andhra, heroism was characterized by the safeguarding of village resources. This inscription connects the expansive history of empires with the tangible experiences of rural populations.

6. 13th Century Telugu Inscription Unearthed: A New Chapter in AP's Socio-Economic History Context:

A unique stone inscription from the 13th century was found in the village of Araveeti Kota, located in the Prakasam district, by local inhabitants. Verified by the ASI Mysore Epigraphy Wing, this discovery provides distinctive historical insights into the professions and taxation systems of medieval Andhra Pradesh.

- **Discovery & Location:**
 - ✓ Site: West side of Araveeti Kota village, Racharla mandal, Prakasam district.
 - ✓ Period: Dated back to the 13th Century.
 - ✓ Authentication: Verified by K. Munirathnam Reddy, Director of Epigraphy, ASI Mysore.
- **Key Historical Figures:**
 - ✓ Donor: Singaraju, son of Devalaraju.
 - ✓ Recipient: Mailara Peddi, a Brahmana from Maradla Madaka Agraharam.
 - ✓ Deity Witness: The grant was made in the presence of Lord Mallikarjuna of Srisailam at Patala Ganga.
- **The Term 'Tadika Vrutthi':**
 - ✓ New Terminology: The inscription introduces the term "Tadika vrutthi" for the first time in epigraphical records.
 - ✓ Meaning: It refers to the profession of weaving bamboo walls, baskets, and household articles.
 - ✓ Taxation Insight: The inscription records the grant of tax collection rights on this profession to the recipient.



- ✓ **Community Link:** It highlights the socio-economic status of the Medara community (bamboo weavers) during the medieval period.
- **Socio-Cultural Significance:**
 - ✓ **Economic History:** Provides evidence of professional taxes (Vrutthi-pannu) levied on specific artisan communities.
 - ✓ **Religious Geography:** Reaffirms the spiritual dominance of Srisailam and the significance of Patala Ganga as a sacred spot for formalizing grants.
 - ✓ **Language Evolution:** Showcases the development of the Telugu script and administrative vocabulary in the 13th century.

7. 16th-Century Vijayanagara Inscriptions Unearthed in Seshachalam Forest (The Hindu) Context:

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered three 16th-century inscriptions from the reign of Vijayanagara King Sadasiva Deva Raya at Sadasivakona in the Seshachalam Hills, Tirupati district (Andhra Pradesh).

Key Findings

- The inscriptions, dated 31 July 1554 CE, are engraved in Telugu, Tamil and Kannada, reflecting the multilingual nature of the Vijayanagara Empire.
- They record the construction of a Shiva temple and a monastery (Mutt) at Sadasivakona during the King's pilgrimage.
- The inscriptions mention grants of temple lands (Kaanika) and tax revenues from the Gudimallam Parasurameswara Temple to support daily worship, food offerings and temple administration.
- They also highlight the role of temple officials and accountants in managing religious endowments.

About Vijayanagara King Sadasiva Deva Raya

- Ruled the Vijayanagara Empire from 1542 to 1570 CE and was the last nominal ruler of the Tuluva dynasty.
- Actual administration was largely exercised by Aliya Rama Raya, who served as the empire's de facto ruler.
- His reign witnessed continued patronage of temples, monasteries and religious endowments, as evidenced by inscriptions across South India.
- The period culminated in the Battle of Talikota (1565), after which the Vijayanagara capital, Hampi, was devastated, marking the beginning of the empire's decline.

Historical Significance

- Demonstrates the Vijayanagara Empire's patronage of temples, pilgrimage centres and religious institutions.
- Provides valuable evidence of the temple economy, land grants and revenue administration during the 16th century.
- Highlights the cultural integration of different linguistic communities under Vijayanagara rule.
- Reinforces the historical importance of the Gudimallam Parasurameswara Temple, one of India's oldest surviving Shiva temples (2nd century BCE).

Conservation Significance

- The discovery enriches India's epigraphic and archaeological records, aiding reconstruction of regional history.
- It underscores the importance of preserving archaeological heritage in ecologically sensitive landscapes such as the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve.

Way Forward

- Digitise and scientifically document inscriptions using advanced imaging technologies.



- Promote interdisciplinary research combining archaeology, epigraphy and history.
- Strengthen conservation and responsible heritage tourism while protecting fragile forest ecosystems.

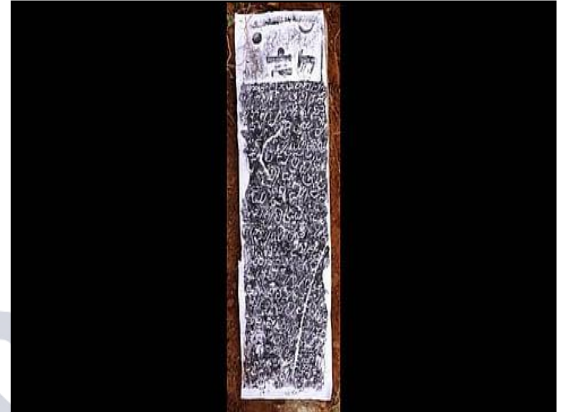
8. 11th-Century Chalukya Inscription Unearthed in Nallamala Forest (Indian Express)

Context:

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered an 11th-century Telugu inscription near Sathakodu village in the Nallamala Reserve Forest (Andhra Pradesh) during an epigraphical survey.
- The inscription belongs to the Chalukyas of Kalyani (Western Chalukyas) and is dated to 1121 CE (Chalukya Vikrama Year 42; Saka 1043).

About the Chalukyas of Kalyani (Western Chalukyas)

- Ruled large parts of the Deccan from 973 to 1189 CE, with Kalyani (Basavakalyan, Karnataka) as their capital.
- Founded by Tailapa II after overthrowing the Rashtrakutas.
- Renowned for temple architecture, administrative efficiency and patronage of Kannada, Sanskrit and Telugu literature.
- Developed the distinctive Western Chalukya architectural style, which served as a transition between the Early Chalukya and Hoysala styles.



About the Chalukya Vikrama Era

- Chalukya Vikrama Year was an era introduced by King Vikramaditya VI of the Western Chalukyas after his accession in 1076 CE.
- It was widely used in inscriptions issued during the Western Chalukya period to record grants, donations and administrative orders.
- The newly discovered inscription is dated to Vikrama Year 42, corresponding to 1121 CE.

Key Findings

- Records the donation of four mattars of wetland and ten matlu of Vaalipolam land under the Pullalacheruvu tank.
- The grant was made by Bhimisetty to support worship at the Sathakodu Devara Temple.
- Written in Telugu script, it reflects the prevalence of Telugu in regional administration.

Historical Significance

- Highlights the importance of the temple economy, where land grants supported religious institutions and local administration.
- Demonstrates the role of irrigation tanks in medieval agrarian and revenue systems.
- Provides evidence of medieval land measurement units, agrarian practices and donor traditions.
- Enriches the epigraphic record of the Nallamala region, offering valuable insights into the socio-economic and cultural history of the Deccan.

9. Archaeological Discoveries in Nallamala: Insights into Andhra Pradesh's Early History (Indian Express)

Context:

A survey by the Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in the Nallamala–Nagarjunasagar–Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) uncovered prehistoric rock paintings, geometric motifs and inscriptions dating from the Megalithic period to the 16th century CE, highlighting the region's rich cultural heritage.

Key Discoveries

- Rock paintings and geometric designs discovered in caves near the Krishna River are preliminarily dated to the Megalithic and Early Historic periods (around 1500 BCE), indicating early human habitation.
- Inscriptions spanning nearly 1,400 years were documented, including Satavahana-period inscriptions in Prakrit language using Brahmi script, along with later inscriptions in Telugu and Kannada, reflecting the linguistic and cultural evolution of the region.



		Rock Art comprises prehistoric paintings and engravings depicting hunting, rituals, animals and daily life, serving as valuable evidence of early human societies.
		Megalithic Culture (c. 1500 BCE–300 BCE) is characterised by large stone burial monuments, iron tools, Black-and-Red Ware pottery and the emergence of settled communities.
		Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions engraved on durable materials such as stone, metal and caves, providing authentic evidence for reconstructing political, social, economic and cultural history.
		The Satavahanas (c. 1st Century BCE–3rd Century CE) were among the earliest major Deccan dynasties, promoting trade, Prakrit literature and Buddhist institutions.

Historical Significance

- The discoveries provide valuable evidence of prehistoric life, settlement patterns, religious practices and artistic traditions in Andhra Pradesh.
- Satavahana inscriptions strengthen understanding of one of the earliest historical dynasties that promoted trade, urbanisation and Buddhist culture in the Deccan.
- The evolution from Brahmi to later regional scripts illustrates the development of language, administration and socio-political institutions over centuries.
- The findings reinforce the importance of the Nallamala region as a continuous centre of human habitation and cultural interaction.

Need for Conservation

- Scientific documentation, digital archiving and advanced dating techniques are essential to preserve these invaluable archaeological assets.
- Strengthening heritage conservation through community participation, eco-sensitive tourism and protection from vandalism and natural degradation is crucial.
- Collaboration between the ASI, Forest Department and academic institutions can promote research while ensuring sustainable management of heritage sites.

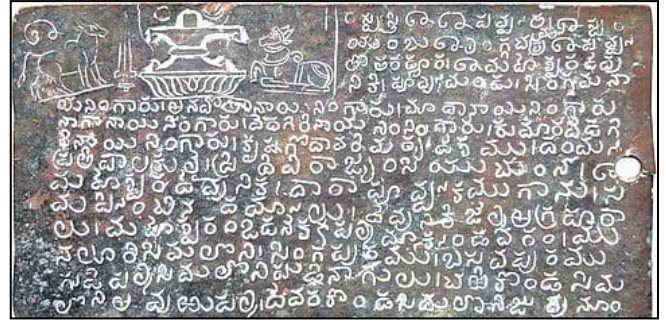
10. National Museum of Epigraphy in Tirupati: Preserving India's Inscriptional Heritage (Indain Express)

Context:

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has agreed in principle to allot land for establishing the National Museum of Epigraphy in Tirupati, an initiative of the Ministry of Culture and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to preserve and promote India's inscriptional heritage

About the National Museum of Epigraphy

- The museum will function as a national repository, research and educational centre showcasing India's epigraphic heritage from ancient to medieval times.
- It will display stone inscriptions, copper-plate grants, photo galleries, digital exhibits and interactive information kiosks, highlighting the evolution of Indian scripts, languages and administrative systems.



Static Perspective

- Epigraphy is the scientific study of inscriptions engraved on durable materials such as stone, metal, terracotta and cave walls. It is one of the most reliable sources for reconstructing ancient and medieval history.
- Major ancient Indian scripts include Brahmi (ancestor of most modern Indian scripts) and Kharosthi (used mainly in the north-western region). Later scripts such as Gupta, Sharada and Tankri reflect the gradual evolution of writing traditions.
- Copper-plate inscriptions generally recorded royal land grants, administrative orders, taxation, genealogy and religious donations, while stone inscriptions commemorated victories, public works and royal proclamations.

Significance

- Preserves India's rich inscriptional and linguistic heritage for future generations.
- Promotes archaeological research, historical studies and awareness of India's cultural evolution.
- Strengthens heritage tourism in Tirupati while creating opportunities for academic collaboration and skill development in archaeology and epigraphy.
- Supports the conservation and digital documentation of fragile historical records.

Way Forward

- Integrate advanced technologies such as 3D scanning, digital archiving and AI-assisted inscription analysis for conservation and research.
- Encourage collaboration among ASI, universities, museums and international research institutions.
- Promote educational outreach through exhibitions, workshops and heritage literacy programmes to popularise India's epigraphic traditions.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Kakinada to be the 'Green Hydrogen Valley of India': CM

Context:

Recently, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu officially declared Kakinada as the "Green Hydrogen Valley of India". This announcement was made during the foundation stone laying ceremony of a massive Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia Production Complex by AM Green (a Greenko Group venture) in Kakinada, marking a significant milestone in India's clean energy transition.

Key Highlights of the Project:

- **The Mega Project:**
 - ✓ **Developer:** AM Green (Greenko Group).
 - ✓ **Location:** Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh (495-acre campus).
 - ✓ **Investment:** ₹15,600 Crore for the production complex + ₹2,000 Crore for 2 GW of Alkaline Electrolyzers.
 - ✓ **Capacity:**
 - Initial production of 0.5 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) of Green Ammonia by mid-2027.
 - Target to scale up to 1.5 MMT per annum.
 - **Global Export Hub:** The Green Ammonia produced here is primarily earmarked for export to Europe, with Germany being the major importer (Uniper Global Commodities).
- **Strategic Importance for Andhra Pradesh:**
 - ✓ **"Speed of Doing Business":** The CM highlighted that AP has transitioned from "Ease of Doing Business" to "Speed of Doing Business," ensuring rapid clearances for such mega projects.
 - ✓ **Cost Reduction:** The project aligns with the state's goal to reduce power procurement costs from ₹4.80/unit to ₹1.19/unit within three years by leveraging renewable energy.
 - ✓ **Soil Health:** Green Ammonia is vital for AP's agriculture, given that the state's soil ranks high in nitrogen and salinity levels.
- **Other Announcements at the Event:**
 - ✓ **Drone Ambulance:** The state's first drone ambulance will be deployed in 2026.
 - ✓ **Quantum Computing:** The first quantum computer will arrive in Amaravati within nine months.



2. Return of the Bison: Nallamala to get 120 Indian Gaurs

Context:

In a historic move for wildlife conservation, the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department has finalized a proposal to reintroduce 120 Indian Gaurs (Indian Bison) into the Nallamala Forests (Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve). This initiative aims to revive the species in the region after a gap of nearly 160 years, pending approval from the Central Government.



Key Highlights of the Initiative:

- **The "Homecoming" Plan:**
 - ✓ **Source:** The Gaurs will be translocated from Madhya Pradesh.
 - ✓ **Numbers:** A total of 120 individuals (males and females) will be introduced.
 - ✓ **Timeline:** The translocation is planned for the next winter season, subject to habitat suitability assessments.
 - ✓ **Scientific Basis:** The male-female ratio for introduction will strictly follow the guidelines prescribed by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
- **Trigger for the Decision:**
 - ✓ The decision was catalyzed by the rare sighting of a solitary male Indian Gaur in the Atmakur forest division (Nandyal district) in July 2024.
 - ✓ Forest officials believe this 10-year-old male migrated from the Karnataka ghats, crossing the Krishna River, proving that the Nallamala corridor is still viable for the species.
- **Ecological Significance:**
 - ✓ **Historical Range:** Gaurs were once native to Nallamala but went locally extinct over a century ago due to habitat loss and hunting.
 - ✓ **Ecosystem Balance:** Reintroducing a large herbivore like the Gaur helps in vegetation control and serves as a prey base for apex predators (Tigers/Leopards), thereby strengthening the food web in the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR).

3. Study Flags Declining Fish Biodiversity in Sompeta Wetlands

Context:

A recent study titled "Ichthyofaunal Diversity of Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh, India" conducted by Andhra University researchers has documented 37 fish species in the Sompeta wetlands (Srikakulam district). However, the study flags a critical decline in biodiversity due to rapid ecological deterioration, categorizing the water quality as "poor."

Key Highlights of the Study:

- **Biodiversity Documentation:**
 - ✓ **Species Count:** The study recorded 37 fish species belonging to 34 genera and 24 families.
 - ✓ **Habitat Distribution:**
 - **Freshwater:** 22 species (e.g., Catla, Reba, Mrigala).
 - **Brackish Water:** 8 species.
 - **Mixed Environments:** 7 species.

- **Key Species:** Catla, Labeo rohita (Rohu), Cyprinus carpio, Channa striata (Murrel), and Oreochromis mossambicus (Tilapia).

- **Major Threats Identified:**

- ✓ **Physico-Chemical Changes:** The study noted drastic alterations in water depth and characteristics due to sediment inflow.
- ✓ **Pollution Sources:** Industrial ash, domestic sewage, and agricultural runoff are the primary culprits.
- ✓ **Water Quality Index (WQI):** The wetland's water was categorized as "Poor" and unsuitable for human consumption.

- **Proposed Conservation Measures:**

- ✓ **Infrastructure:** Construction of sluice gates and embankments to control monsoon flooding and sedimentation.
- ✓ **Bio-Control:** Removal of invasive Water Hyacinth using biological agents like Chinese Grass Carp or plant-eating snails.
- ✓ **Zoning:** Establishing a Buffer Zone using GIS and Remote Sensing tools to protect the core wetland area.
- ✓ **Regulation:** Restricting annual leasing of wetlands near bird sanctuaries and banning mass capture during breeding seasons.



4. Rising Tides: Visakhapatnam Faces Sea Level Rise up to 98 cm by 2100

Context:

A new scientific study titled "Recent Past and Future Projection of Sea Level: A Case Study of Puri, Chennai, and Visakhapatnam" projects that sea levels in Visakhapatnam could rise between 41 cm to 98 cm by the end of the century (2091-2100), depending on global emission scenarios.

I. Key Highlights of the Study:

- **Future Projections (2091-2100):** The study used CMIP6 (Climate Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6) models to predict sea-level rise under three specific emission scenarios:
 - ✓ Low-Emissions Scenario (SSP1-2.6): Projected rise of 41 cm.
 - ✓ Middle-Emissions Scenario (SSP2-4.5): Projected rise of 70 cm.
 - ✓ High-Emissions Scenario (SSP5-8.5): Projected rise of up to 98 cm.
- **Historical Trends (1995-2020):**
 - ✓ **Rate of Rise:** Visakhapatnam recorded a historical sea-level rise of approximately 4.96 mm per year.
 - ✓ **Comparative Analysis:**
 - Chennai: Highest trend (~5.2 mm/year).
 - Visakhapatnam: Moderate trend (~4.96 mm/year).
 - Puri: Lowest trend among the three (~4.6 mm/year).

- The rise became significantly more noticeable after 2010, with peaks close to 0.1 meters.
- **Factors Driving the Rise:** The authors identified a mix of global, regional, and local factors:
 - ✓ **Global/Regional:** Ocean warming (causing thermal expansion of water), melting glaciers/ice sheets, and shifts in Bay of Bengal currents and salinity.
 - ✓ **Local:** Land subsidence caused by excessive groundwater extraction and heavy port-related infrastructure development contributing to relative sea-level rise.

II. Vulnerability and Impact:

- **Dynamic Vulnerability Index:**
 - ✓ The study warns that Visakhapatnam's vulnerability will increase across all scenarios from 2021-2030 through to 2100.
 - ✓ **High Risk Zones:** Expanding urban footprints, low-lying coastal zones, and the strategic Port and Industrial facilities are most exposed.
- **Consequences:**
 - ✓ More frequent flooding during high tides and cyclones.
 - ✓ Shoreline erosion, threatening beaches (like RK Beach/Rushikonda).
 - ✓ Stress on industrial infrastructure located near the coast (e.g., Steel Plant, HPCL refinery zones).
- **Recommendations:**
 - ✓ Strengthening Early-Warning Systems.
 - ✓ Improving urban drainage systems to handle higher tide levels.
 - ✓ Strict implementation of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms to guide new development away from exposed areas.



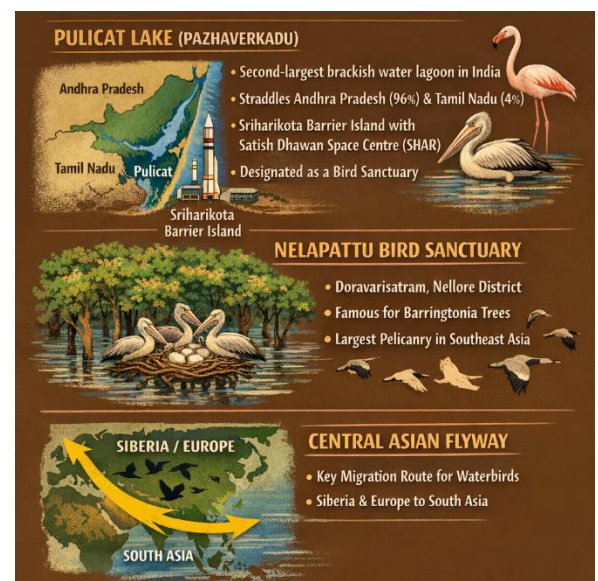
5. Winter Retreat: Pulicat and Nelapattu Teem with Migratory Birds

Context:

With the onset of winter in January 2026, the twin sanctuaries of Pulicat and Nelapattu in Nellore district have transformed into bustling avian habitats. Favorable water levels and early monsoons have attracted thousands of migratory birds, including rare species from as far as Siberia, turning the region into a vibrant eco-tourism hub.

Key Highlights of the Season:

- **Avian Diversity & Numbers:**
 - ✓ **Pulicat Lake:** Hosting nearly 52,000 birds this season. The star attraction is the Greater Flamingo (16,500 spotted), locally revered as 'Samudrapu Ramachilakulu' (Parrots of the Sea).
 - ✓ **Nelapattu Sanctuary:** Currently hosting over 7,500 nesting birds.



- ✓ **Species:** The wetlands are teeming with Grey Pelicans, Painted Storks, Glossy Ibises, and Eurasian Coots.
- ✓ **Migration Pattern:** Birds typically arrive by October for feeding and breeding and begin their return journey (often with young ones) by March.
- **Unique Nesting Behaviour at Nelapattu:**
 - ✓ The sanctuary is famous for its *Barringtonia acutangula* (Kadapa) trees, which serve as nesting sites.
 - ✓ **Tiered Nesting:** A distinct hierarchy is observed:
 - **Top Branches:** Occupied by Pelicans.
 - **Mid-Levels:** Taken by Open-billed Storks.
 - **Lower Branches:** Used by Cormorants.
- **Ecological Impact of 'Cyclone Montha':**
 - ✓ The report highlights that recent rains brought by Cyclone Montha have shifted feeding zones.
 - ✓ Usually found near the ISRO road (Sriharikota), large flocks of flamingos have now moved to shallower parts of the lake due to increased water levels, altering tourist sighting patterns.
- **Community Conservation:**
 - ✓ Local communities treat these birds as "Celestial Guests," playing a vital role in protecting the ecosystem.
 - ✓ The presence of rich aquatic life (prawns, plankton) in Pulicat makes it a nutrient-rich wintering ground, supporting 163 species.

6. Mission HANUMAN: AP's Strategic Response to Human-Wildlife Conflict Context:

Recently, the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department announced the launch of the HANUMAN (Healing And Nurturing Units for Monitoring, Aid & Nursing of Wildlife) initiative. This program establishes a specialized rapid response framework to manage the rising frequency of human-animal encounters in the state's vulnerable forest fringes.

I. Key Highlights of the Initiative:

- **Target Vulnerable Ranges:** The project identifies high-conflict zones in the Tirupati Circle, including Tirupati, Panapakam, Bhakarapet, Srikalahasti, Madanapalli, and Rajampet.
- **Rapid Response Teams (RRTs):** Each identified range will be equipped with a dedicated RRT led by a Forest Range Officer (FRO) and supported by Section Officers, Beat Officers, and a veterinary assistant.
- **Specialized Infrastructure:** Teams are being provided with dedicated vehicles, specialized rescue gear, and wireless communication sets.
- **Wildlife Ambulances:** Two specialized ambulances will be stationed at Tirupati and Rajampet to provide immediate medical aid to injured animals.
- **Capacity Building:** A one-day training module in Tirupati covered critical SOPs, including:
 - Elephant and Leopard conflict management.
 - Scientific tranquilization protocols and snake rescue methods.
 - Crowd management and public safety during emergency rescue operations.

II. Conflict Mitigation & Community Dimensions:

- **Scientific Management:** By integrating veterinary assistants and conservation biologists into RRTs, the state is moving toward a scientific, data-driven approach to wildlife rescue rather than traditional reactive methods.
- **Psychological Buffer:** Stationing ambulances and rapid response units near villages acts as a psychological buffer, reducing the likelihood of "retaliatory killings" of wildlife by frightened local communities.
- **Ecological Connectivity:** Many of the identified ranges (like Bhakarapet and Rajampet) are part of the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve, emphasizing the need for professional monitoring in one of India's most biodiverse landscapes.

7. Green Power Surge: AP Sets Ambitious 160 GW Renewable Energy Target

Context:

Recently, Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar announced the Integrated Clean Energy Policy, targeting a massive 160 GW of renewable power generation. The policy focuses on restoring financial stability to the power sector while ensuring long-term sustainability and consumer protection.

I. Key Highlights & Performance Indicators:

- **The 160 GW Vision:** The state is moving toward a 160 GW renewable energy goal to position Andhra Pradesh as a global leader in clean energy.
- **Current Capacity:** AP's total installed capacity stands at 21,457 MW, with 37% already coming from renewable sources.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Strategic reforms have reduced power purchase costs from ₹7.71 per unit to ₹6.35 per unit, resulting in a projected saving of ₹340 crore for 2025–26.
- **"True-Down" Milestone:** In a national first, the state achieved a "true-down" of 13 paise per unit, passing on financial savings directly to the consumers instead of imposing additional burdens.

II. Welfare & Subsidy Framework:

The government has allocated ₹13,000 crore for power subsidies to support various socio-economic sectors:

- **Agriculture:** Free power to 22 lakh farmers with a guaranteed 9-hour quality supply daily.
- **Social Safety Net:** 200 units of free power for 20 lakh SC/ST households.
- **Livelihood Support:** Aqua Farmers: Power at a subsidized rate of ₹1.50 per unit.
- **Weavers:** From April 1, 2026, handlooms will receive 200 units free, and power looms will receive 500 units free.
- **Others:** Subsidies extended to washermen and salons.

III. Economic & Administrative Dimensions:

- **Backbone of Economy:** The energy sector is treated as the primary engine for industrial growth, particularly for the burgeoning technology and manufacturing sectors.
- **Restoring Investor Confidence:** The policy aims to bring back renewable energy investors by providing a stable regulatory environment and addressing the debt-ridden legacy of the previous term.
- **Energy Security:** The shift toward a high renewable mix (Solar, Wind, and Pumped Hydro) ensures long-term energy security and reduces dependence on volatile coal prices.

IV. Energy & Policy Framework:

- **Renewable Energy (RE):** Energy derived from natural processes that are replenished at a rate equal to or faster than the rate at which they are consumed (Solar, Wind, Hydro, Biomass).
- **True-up / True-down:** An administrative process where the actual cost of power purchase is reconciled with the estimated cost. A "True-down" occurs when the actual cost is lower than the estimate, allowing for a tariff reduction.
- **APGENCO:** Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Limited. One of the highest performing power utilities in India, responsible for the operation and maintenance of the state's thermal and hydel power plants.
- **SDG 7:** Affordable and Clean Energy. One of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the UN, which AP's 160 GW target directly helps India achieve.

8. Avian Discovery: First Photographic Record of Falcated Duck in AP

Context:

Recently, a rare Falcated Duck (*Mareca falcata*) was photographed at Sylada Lake in Srikakulam district. This sighting marks the first-ever documented photographic record of this East Palearctic migratory species in Andhra Pradesh, highlighting the state's importance as a wintering destination.



I. Key Highlights of the Sighting:

- **Species Profile:** Also known as the Falcated Teal, it is a gadwall-sized dabbling duck.
- **Distinguishing Features:** The adult male is highly distinctive with an iridescent green-and-copper head, a pale grey scalloped body, and unique long, curved tertial feathers.
- **Native Habitat:** It is native to the East Palearctic region, breeding in eastern Siberia, Mongolia, and northern Japan. It migrates to South Asia for the winter.
- **Habitat in AP:** The bird was spotted in the freshwater ecosystem of Sylada Lake, Srikakulam. The district's diverse landscape—comprising inland lakes like Vemulada and brackish estuaries of the Nagavali and Vamsadhara—makes it a critical hub for migratory waders.

II. Conservation Status and Threats:

- **IUCN Status:** Listed as 'Near Threatened'. This status necessitates focused monitoring of its wintering sites to prevent population decline.
- **Ecological Indicators:** Migratory ducks are sensitive bio-indicators. Their presence confirms the availability of specific aquatic plant matter and the relative health of the wetland.
- **Threats to Habitats:** Srikakulam's wetlands are currently facing severe pressures from:
 - **Unregulated Sand Mining:** Disrupting riverine and estuarine ecology.
 - **Coastal Development:** Leading to the fragmentation of brackish water habitats.
 - **Lack of Formal Recognition:** Many of these sites are not yet designated as Important Bird Areas (IBAs), leaving them vulnerable to land-use changes.

Dimension	Relevance / Definition
Dabbling Ducks	A category of ducks that feed mainly on the surface of the water or by tipping headfirst into the water to reach aquatic plants (unlike "Diving Ducks" that submerge completely).
Palearctic Realm	The largest of the eight biogeographic realms, covering Eurasia north of the Himalayas, North Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula.
IBA (Important Bird Area)	A site identified using an internationally agreed set of criteria as being globally important for the conservation of bird populations. In India, these are identified by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and BirdLife International.
River Estuaries in AP	The Nagavali and Vamsadhara are major rivers of North Coastal Andhra. Their estuaries are nutrient-rich zones where freshwater meets the sea, providing ideal feeding grounds for migratory birds.

9. Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0: Andhra Pradesh's Blueprint for Universal Water Access Context:

In a notable advancement for rural development, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti to execute Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0. This agreement, concluded in New Delhi, signifies the extension of the mission's deadline to 2028, offering the state an essential opportunity to attain 100% functional household tap connections (FHTC).

I. The Strategic Extension: JJM 2.0 (2025–2028)

- The shift to JJM 2.0 aims to tackle the incomplete objectives of the initial phase. Although the national initiative has successfully reached 16 crore households, Andhra Pradesh is concentrating on addressing the remaining deficiencies, emphasizing not only the installation of taps but also the Sustainability of Supply.
- **Operational Maintenance:** A thorough policy implemented in September 2025 by the state government transitions the emphasis from "construction" to "operation and maintenance" (O&M), guaranteeing that the infrastructure remains operational over the long term.
- **Fiscal Dialogue:** The state has sought increased financial support from the Centre, noting that approximately 13 lakh households are still excluded from the current budgetary framework due to earlier inconsistencies in project reports.

II. Social Engineering: DWCRA and Women Empowerment

A distinctive aspect of the mission's execution in Andhra Pradesh is the incorporation of DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) groups.

- **Quality Surveillance:** Rural women are being engaged to perform water quality assessments, thereby transforming their roles from "water fetchers" to "water managers."
- **Impact:** On a national scale, JJM has already alleviated the physical burden of water collection for nearly 9 crore women; in Andhra Pradesh, the objective is to convert this time-saving into economic productivity through SHG-led oversight.

III. The Polavaram Connection:

- During the proceedings of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the state government associated rural water security with significant irrigation initiatives, calling on the Centre to accelerate the Polavaram Irrigation Project.
- The objective is to finalize the project by the time of the Godavari Pushkarams, thereby guaranteeing a reliable water supply for both agricultural irrigation and the ambitious drinking water goals set by JJM 2.0.

IV. Key Pillars of JJM 2.0 in Andhra Pradesh:

Pillar	Strategic Focus
Infrastructure	Transitioning from shared community points to individual household taps.
Governance	Fixing "shortcomings in DPRs" and seeking revised financial allocations.
Maintenance	Implementing the September 2025 Comprehensive O&M Policy.
Empowerment	Involving DWCRA groups in biochemical water quality testing.

V. The "Har Ghar Jal" Vision: Challenges & Realities

In spite of the prevailing optimism, the state is confronted with a pressing time constraint. The Deputy Chief Minister emphasized that, even with the currently allocated funds, achieving universal coverage poses a significant challenge. The effectiveness of JJM 2.0 in Andhra Pradesh will hinge on the following factors:

- **Technical Precision:** Amending the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to accurately represent the actual requirements observed in the field.
- **Collaborative Federalism:** Obtaining supplementary "gap-funding" from the Union Government.
- **Sustainable Resource Management:** Safeguarding local groundwater resources and connecting major canals to rural water supply systems to avert the risk of taps running dry during the summer months.

Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 transcends mere plumbing; it constitutes a public health initiative. By integrating the mission with DWCRA groups, Andhra Pradesh is fostering a 'Circular Economy of Water,' wherein the community that utilizes the water also bears the responsibility for its quality and conservation.

10. The Return of the Melanistic Legend: IGZP Visakhapatnam Welcomes Black Panther After 40 Years

Context:

In a significant advancement for wildlife conservation and biological education, the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) located in Visakhapatnam has effectively carried out a substantial animal exchange with the Assam State Zoo in Guwahati. The introduction of these notable species, especially the Black Panther, signifies a historic achievement for the state's leading zoological institution.



I. The Exchange: Enhancing Biological Management

The existing exchange program aims to enhance the genetic vitality of captive populations while ensuring a representative diversity of India's distinct climatic regions.

From Guwahati to Visakhapatnam: The IGZP has successfully acquired a wide array of Himalayan and tropical species, which include:

- **Black Panther (Melanistic Leopard):** Making a return to the zoo after a 40-year absence.
- **Asiatic Lions:** A crucial male and female pair, essential for prominent conservation education initiatives.
- **Himalayan Black Bears:** Symbolizing the high-altitude wildlife of the Northeast region.
- **Asian Palm Civets & Common Leopards:** Contributing to the diversity of nocturnal and carnivorous species.
- **From Visakhapatnam to Guwahati:** In a reciprocal exchange, IGZP has dispatched species such as Ring-tailed Lemurs, Jungle Cats, Green Iguanas, and a Striped Hyena to the Assam State Zoo.

II. The Science of Quarantine and Adaptation:

In accordance with established veterinary protocols, all newly arrived animals have been placed in a specialized quarantine facility. This administrative and biological measure guarantees:

- **Pathogen Screening:** Preventing the introduction of any external diseases into the local animal population.
- **Climate Acclimatization:** Facilitating the transition of animals from the humid, subtropical environment of Guwahati to the coastal, tropical climate of Visakhapatnam.
- **Stress Management:** Allowing the animals to recuperate from the physical challenges associated with inter-state transportation prior to their exhibition in permanent enclosures.

III. Species Profile & Conservation Status

Species	Unique Feature	IUCN Red List Status
Asiatic Lion	Found only in the Gir Forest (and zoo breeding centers).	Endangered
Black Panther	A melanistic variant of the leopard; not a separate species.	Vulnerable (as Leopard)
Himalayan Black Bear	Characterized by a white 'V' shaped mark on the chest.	Vulnerable
Striped Hyena	Known for its distinctive mane and nocturnal habits.	Near Threatened
Asian Palm Civet	Important for seed dispersal in tropical forests.	Least Concern

11. Black Panther Returns to Vizag Zoo: A New Era for Wildlife Conservation in AP

Context:

Following a 40-year absence, the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) located in Visakhapatnam has introduced a Black Panther to its collection. This significant enhancement was facilitated by the zoo's Animal Adoption Scheme, which received backing from a private contribution of ₹1,25,000 for a duration of one year.

- **The Arrival & Adoption Details:**

- ✓ Historical Achievement: This marks the first occasion since the mid-1980s that a Black Panther has been accommodated at IGZP.
- ✓ Adoption Duration: From April 21, 2026, to April 20, 2027.
- ✓ Financial Assistance: A contribution of ₹1,25,000 has been allocated through the "Animal Adoption Scheme."
- ✓ Goal: To encourage community involvement in wildlife conservation and to cover the animal's nutritional and medical expenses.



- **The Black Panther:**

- ✓ Species Identity: Not a separate species; it is a melanistic variant of the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in Asia/Africa.
- ✓ Cause of Color: Result of Melanism, a genetic condition leading to an overproduction of the pigment melanin.
- ✓ Conservation Status:
 - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.
 - Wildlife Protection Act (1972): Schedule I (highest protection).
 - CITES: Appendix I.

- **Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) Profile:**

- ✓ Location: Nestled within the Eastern Ghats in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ Significance: Recognized as one of the largest zoological parks in India, encompassing around 625 acres.
- ✓ Unique Feature: Enclosed by the Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary on three sides, with the Bay of Bengal bordering the fourth.
- ✓ Conservation Focus: Esteemed for its breeding centers dedicated to the conservation of endangered species, as well as its initiatives for rescue and rehabilitation.

- **Strategic Importance of the Animal Adoption Scheme:**

- ✓ Public-Private Partnership: Motivates both citizens and corporations to engage directly in the preservation of biodiversity.
- ✓ Education: Serves as a mechanism to raise public awareness about the dangers confronting large felines.
- ✓ Financial Sustainability: Enhances governmental funding to guarantee exceptional care for animals in captivity.

12. AP High Court Intervenes for Great Indian Bustard Protection at Rollapadu

Context:

The Andhra Pradesh High Court, led by Chief Justice Lisa Gill, has issued notices to the Centre and State regarding a PIL for the protection of the Great Indian Bustard (GIB). The petition argues that the current conservation plan for the Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary fails to comply with Supreme Court safety guidelines.

- **The Judicial Proceedings:**

- ✓ The Bench: Presided over by Chief Justice Lisa Gill and Justice N. Jayasurya.
- ✓ The Respondents: Notices have been served to the Ministry of Environment (MoEFCC), the State Forest Department, and APTRANSCO.
- ✓ Key Argument: The petitioner advocates for the implementation of Rajasthan's conservation model to avert the extinction of the bird species in Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ Immediate Action: APTRANSCO has commenced the process of issuing tenders for "Bird Diverters" aimed at preventing collisions between the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) and power lines.



- **Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- ✓ Location: Nandyal District (previously Kurnool), Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ Ecosystem: Renowned for its distinctive Open Grassland Ecosystem, serving as the main habitat for the Great Indian Bustard (GIB).
- ✓ Conservation Status: Founded in 1988 with the specific aim of safeguarding the Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican.

- **The Great Indian Bustard (GIB):**

- ✓ IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (nearing extinction).
- ✓ Legal Protection: Classified under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (highest level of protection).
- ✓ Major Threats: Electrocution from overhead power lines, habitat destruction caused by agriculture, and predatory stray dogs.
- ✓ Biological Fact: Among the heaviest flying birds globally; possesses limited frontal vision, rendering power lines dangerous.

13. Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park to Launch Nocturnal Animal House in Tirupati Context:

The Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park (SVZP) located in Tirupati is in the process of creating a specialized Nocturnal Animal House aimed at showcasing rare and exotic nocturnal species. This distinctive facility is being constructed with financial support from the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) as part of a strategic conservation effort.

- **Project Overview & Infrastructure:**

- ✓ Location: Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park (SVZP), Tirupati.
- ✓ Project Cost: ₹6.5 crore, entirely financed by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).
- ✓ Infrastructure: The establishment includes 18 uniquely designed cubicles, with each cubicle having the capacity to house two to four animals.
- ✓ Capacity: It is intended to support at least 10 distinct nocturnal species at the same time.



- **Animal Exchange Program & Exotic Species:**

- ✓ Source of Animals: Exotic species are being sourced from Vantara, the esteemed wildlife sanctuary located in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- ✓ **New Arrivals:**
 - Marmoset Monkeys: This species measures 20 inches in length and is commonly referred to as finger-sized monkeys.
 - Meerkats: These are small foraging mammals indigenous to southern Africa.
- ✓ Pipeline Species: Jungle cats, Slender Loris, and Civet Cats are set to be included in the exhibit soon.

- **The Strategic TTD & Forest Department MoU:**

- ✓ Legal Requirement: The financial support provided by TTD is a mandatory contribution as stipulated by the Forest Law, regulated through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- ✓ The Civet Cat Connection: The zoo allocates space and maintenance for Civet Cats, which generate a yellowish glandular secretion referred to as Civet oil.
- ✓ Temple Ceremonies: This uniquely harvested Civet oil serves as a crucial component in the sacred Abhishekams (rituals) dedicated to Lord Venkateswara at the Tirumala temple every Friday.

Overview of Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park (SVZP):

Located at the foothills of the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve in Tirupati. Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park is a prominent wildlife conservation center. Known for its vast expanse, it uniquely integrates modern biodiversity conservation with ancient Indian cultural heritage.

- **Geographical Scale & Status:**

- ✓ Massive Area: Spread over approximately 5,532 acres (22 sq. km), it is recognized as one of the largest zoological parks in Asia by geographical area.
- ✓ Establishment: Foundation was laid in 1987, and it was officially opened to the public in 1993.
- ✓ Topography: Features a natural forest environment that perfectly mimics the wild habitats of the Eastern Ghats.

- **Unique Thematic Concept:**

- ✓ Mythological Zoo: It is celebrated as a "Mytho-Zoo," uniquely conceptualized around Hindu mythology.
- ✓ Thematic Enclosures: Animals and bird species are housed in enclosures named after locations and characters from Indian epics (e.g., the Ramayana and Mahabharata).

- **Ecological & Conservation Focus:**

- ✓ Endemic Focus: Acts as a crucial conservation hub for the endemic and endangered flora and fauna of the Seshachalam Hills.
- ✓ Specialized Centers: Houses a dedicated Leopard Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre.
- ✓ New Additions: Currently upgrading its infrastructure with a ₹6.5 Crore Nocturnal Animal House to expand its ex-situ conservation effort.

14. India's First Ethanol-to-Jet Fuel (SAF) Plant

Context:

India recently marked a significant milestone in its clean energy transition by initiating the construction of its first Ethanol-to-Jet (ETJ) Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) plant.

Key Highlights of the Project:

- Location: Established at NTPC Green Energy's Green Hydrogen Hub in Pudimadaka, Andhra Pradesh.
- Executing Agencies: NTPC awarded the primary EPC contract to Bengaluru-based GPS Renewables.
- Technology Backup: Lummus Technology provides the core ETJ license, while Xytel India handles engineering.
- Production Capacity: Designed to generate 1,800 tonnes of SAF annually by March 2029.

The Technological Process:

- Utilizes ethanol directly derived from captured carbon dioxide.
- The multi-step process includes ethanol-to-ethylene conversion and olefins oligomerisation.
- Final hydroprocessing yields market-ready Sustainable Aviation Fuel and renewable diesel.

Significance:

- Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF): A green alternative to fossil jet fuels, cutting lifecycle carbon emissions by up to 80%.
- CORSIA Compliance: Helps Indian aviation align with the ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme.
- Energy Security: Reduces reliance on imported Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) by leveraging domestic biofuel.
- Net Zero Goals: Directly supports India's "Panchamrit" target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.
- Circular Economy: Converts waste CO₂ into valuable transport fuel, preventing atmospheric greenhouse gas buildup.

This indigenous capacity building shifts India from a technology importer to a domestic producer, making green aviation commercially viable while utilizing the existing ethanol ecosystem.

15. Andhra Pradesh: A Strategic Hub for Rare Earth Elements (REE)

Context:

A recent report highlights that Andhra Pradesh holds nearly 30% of India's monazite reserves. This positions the state as a critical player in developing India's strategic minerals sector and reducing import dependence on China.

Key Highlights of the Report:

- Global Standing: India holds about 8% of global REE reserves, making it the third-largest holder worldwide.
- AP's Contribution: Out of India's 13.15 million tonnes of monazite, Andhra Pradesh accounts for approximately 3.8 million tonnes.
- Import Dependency: Despite vast reserves, India imports 60-80% of its REE requirements, primarily from China, due to poor processing capacity.
- State Investments: The AP government plans a ₹50,000 crore investment over the next decade for REE mining and downstream manufacturing.
- Strategic Corridors: The Union Government plans dedicated rare earth corridors in coastal states, with a comprehensive policy expected by June 2026.

Significance:

- Monazite Sands: Placer deposits found along the coastal regions of AP, Odisha, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
- Mineral Composition: Contains light rare earths (cerium, lanthanum, neodymium) crucial for EVs, semiconductors, and green technology.
- Radioactive Element: Monazite contains Thorium, a radioactive material strictly regulated under the Atomic Energy Act, 1962.
- Regulatory Bottleneck: Due to its radioactive nature, commercial mining is heavily restricted to state-run IREL (India) Limited, curbing private participation.
- Strategic Autonomy: Developing domestic REE processing is vital for India's technological sovereignty and transition to renewable energy.

Leveraging Andhra Pradesh's monazite reserves through advanced processing and private-public partnerships is essential to break the Chinese monopoly on critical minerals.

16. Jaladhara-Jalaharathi Programme: Boosting Water Security

Context:

The Andhra Pradesh government's flagship "Jaladhara-Jalaharathi" programme is witnessing rapid execution in the NTR district. Driven by a 100-day special action plan, the initiative focuses on large-scale water conservation and groundwater recharge.

Key Highlights of the Initiative:

- Targeted Action Plan: Executed as a 100-day drive focusing on tank desilting, sluice repairs, and feeder channel restoration.
- Scientific Approach: Implements village-level water budgeting based on a thorough analysis of decade-long hydrological data.
- Infrastructure Push: Prioritizes the construction of recharge pits and percolation tanks to capture monsoon runoff effectively.
- Massive Scale: Aims to sustainably rejuvenate 439 traditional water bodies across the NTR district.
- Community Driven: Relies heavily on decentralized public participation and local irrigation associations for execution.

Significance:

- Panchayati Raj Empowerment: Aligns with the 11th Schedule (Article 243G), empowering local bodies in minor water management.
- Sustainable Goals: Directly advances India's commitment to SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).
- Drought Mitigation: Buffers groundwater tables against erratic monsoons, building climate resilience for rainfed agriculture.
- Ecological Balance: Restoring rural tanks supports local biodiversity and serves as a critical lifeline for livestock.

The "Jaladhara" model demonstrates that combining traditional water harvesting wisdom with scientific data and decentralized community participation is the most viable path to climate-resilient agriculture in Andhra Pradesh.

17. Mangrove Encroachment in West Godavari: An Ecological Crisis

Context:

Large stretches of ecologically sensitive mangrove forests along the Perupalem coast in West Godavari are facing severe threats due to rampant encroachment and their illegal conversion into aquaculture ponds.

Key Highlights of the Issue:

- Drastic Decline: Mangrove cover in the region has shrunk drastically from 2,000 acres in the 1950s to barely 510 acres today.
- Illegal Conversions: Nearly 70 acres of crucial creek and mangrove areas were recently converted into aqua ponds under the guise of tourism.
- Regulatory Violations: Aqua cultivation is operating illegally within the prohibited 300 to 500-metre radius of the forests.
- Demanded Action: Environmentalists are seeking an urgent joint departmental survey utilizing GPS mapping and historical land records.
- Legal Recourse: The Coastal Environment Protection Committee has threatened to approach the National Green Tribunal (NGT) over administrative inaction.

Static Relevance & Core Concepts:

- CRZ-I Classification: Mangroves are highly sensitive ecosystems strictly protected under Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ-I) norms.
- Statutory Backing: CRZ notifications are issued by the MoEFCC under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

- Ecological Bio-shields: Mangroves act as natural shock absorbers, protecting coastal communities from cyclones and storm surges.
- Blue Carbon Sinks: Coastal ecosystems are highly effective at sequestering carbon, aiding in climate change mitigation.
- NGT Act, 2010: Empowers the specialized tribunal to effectively expedite cases related to environmental protection and conservation.

The rampant degradation of West Godavari's mangroves highlights the urgent need for stringent CRZ enforcement to balance economically lucrative aquaculture with critical coastal ecological security.

18. Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) Wins 2026 Food Planet Prize (Down To Earth)

Context:

Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) won the 2026 Food Planet Prize, awarded by Sweden's Curt Bergfors Foundation, for promoting sustainable, climate-resilient and community-led agricultural practices.

About APCNF

- Launched in 2016 by Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) under the Department of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- It is one of the world's largest community-managed natural farming initiatives, covering around 1.8 million farming families through 340,000 Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- The programme promotes chemical-free farming, local bio-inputs, crop diversification, soil regeneration and farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing.

Significance

- Reduces dependence on synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, thereby lowering cultivation costs.
- Improves soil health, biodiversity, water conservation and carbon sequestration, contributing to climate-resilient agriculture.
- Enhances farmers' net incomes through reduced input costs and sustainable production.
- Strengthens women's participation, with SHGs playing a pivotal role in extension services and capacity building.
- Serves as a scalable model for sustainable agriculture, now being adopted across 22 Indian States and countries such as Sri Lanka and Zambia.

Challenges

- Ensuring scientific validation and long-term productivity across diverse agro-climatic regions.
- Scaling up training, market access and certification for natural produce.
- Addressing farmers' transition risks and initial yield uncertainties.

Way Forward

- Integrate natural farming with climate adaptation, watershed development and sustainable value chains.
- Strengthen research, digital extension services and market linkages for natural produce.
- Promote convergence with flagship schemes such as National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and DAY-NRLM to accelerate nationwide adoption.

19. Proposal to Reclassify Andhra's Madhurawada-Bheemunipatnam Coast as CRZ-II (Indian Express)

Context:

The Andhra Pradesh Government has proposed the reclassification of the Madhurawada-Bheemunipatnam coastal stretch from Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)-III to CRZ-II to facilitate planned urban development and infrastructure expansion.

About Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)

- The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) is governed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 through the CRZ Notification, 2019 issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).
- CRZ-II comprises substantially built-up urban coastal areas within municipal limits, where regulated development is permitted.
- CRZ-III covers relatively undisturbed rural and natural coastal areas, where stricter development controls, including No Development Zones (NDZs), are applicable.

Why is Reclassification Proposed?

- Rapid urbanisation and expansion of civic infrastructure along the corridor have transformed the area into a predominantly urban landscape.
- The proposal seeks to support major infrastructure projects, including the Beach Corridor, Vizag Bay City, Metro Rail, and enhanced connectivity to Bhogapuram International Airport.

Significance

- Facilitates planned urban expansion and improves infrastructure connectivity.
- Attracts investments in tourism, real estate and logistics, contributing to regional economic growth.
- Supports integrated coastal and urban planning in one of Andhra Pradesh's fastest-growing regions.

Challenges

- Increased development pressure may threaten coastal ecosystems, biodiversity and natural habitats.
- Higher vulnerability to coastal erosion, flooding and climate change-induced sea-level rise.
- Balancing infrastructure development with ecological conservation and the livelihoods of coastal communities remains a key challenge.

Way Forward

- Ensure that any reclassification is based on scientific assessment by the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM) and complies with the CRZ Notification, 2019.
- Strengthen Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMPs), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and public consultations.
- Promote climate-resilient infrastructure, coastal ecosystem restoration and sustainable urban planning.

20. Aqua Corridor to Strengthen Andhra Pradesh's Blue Economy and Seafood Exports (Indian Express)

Context:

The Andhra Pradesh Government has proposed an Aqua Corridor connecting Amaravati, Bhimavaram, Kakinada, Visakhapatnam, Krishnapatnam and Nellore to strengthen the State's aquaculture ecosystem, enhance seafood exports and promote value-added fisheries.

About the Aqua Corridor

- The proposed corridor aims to integrate aquaculture production, processing, research, logistics, innovation and exports through a coordinated infrastructure network.
- It will serve as a hub for research institutions, seafood processing units, startups, innovation centres and cold-chain infrastructure, improving the efficiency of the fisheries value chain.
- The initiative aligns with the vision of "Pond to Port", "Farmer to Global Consumer" and the Blue Economy.

Significance

- Enhances Andhra Pradesh's position as India's leading producer of fish and shrimp while boosting export competitiveness.
- Promotes value addition, branding and seafood processing, enabling higher income for fishers and aquaculture farmers.
- Strengthens logistics through better integration of ports, airports and cold-chain facilities.

- Generates employment across fisheries, food processing, logistics, packaging and allied industries.
- Contributes to Viksit Bharat by fostering sustainable coastal and marine economic development.

Challenges

- Strengthening disease surveillance, biosecurity and quality standards in aquaculture.
- Addressing environmental concerns such as water pollution, salinity and coastal ecosystem degradation.
- Expanding cold-chain infrastructure and export logistics.
- Ensuring sustainable aquaculture practices and compliance with international food safety standards.

Way Forward

- Promote sustainable aquaculture under the Blue Economy framework with climate-resilient practices.
- Strengthen value addition through Mega Seafood Processing Parks, modern processing units and export-oriented infrastructure.
- Improve research, innovation, digital traceability and market intelligence.
- Leverage schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) to modernise the sector.

21. Groundwater Stress in Visakhapatnam – Indian Express

Why in News?

- July 2026 monitoring showed inadequate aquifer recharge across several parts of Visakhapatnam district amid uneven monsoon rainfall.
- Arilova recorded the deepest groundwater level at 36.25 metres below ground level (mbgl), compared with 28.70 m in June.

Key Groundwater Stress Areas

- Endada: 30.86 m; Madhurawada: 27.23 m; Pedda Rushikonda: 24.14 m below ground level.
- Rapid urban expansion, land-use change and groundwater extraction are increasing pressure on aquifers.

Geographical Dimension

- Visakhapatnam has varied aquifer conditions: southern alluvial plains generally have better groundwater potential, while northern hard-rock/hilly areas have lower resources.
- Groundwater behaviour varies with geology, rainfall distribution and extraction intensity.

Concerns

- Reduced recharge can affect urban water security, domestic supply and groundwater-dependent livelihoods.
- Excessive extraction may aggravate aquifer depletion and water-quality risks.

Way Forward

- Strengthen rainwater harvesting, recharge structures and restoration of tanks/water bodies.
- Integrate aquifer-based planning with urban development and regulate excessive extraction.
- Promote efficient water use and groundwater monitoring for long-term water security.

22. Andhra Pradesh State Action Plan on Zoonotic Diseases – Indian Express

Why in News?

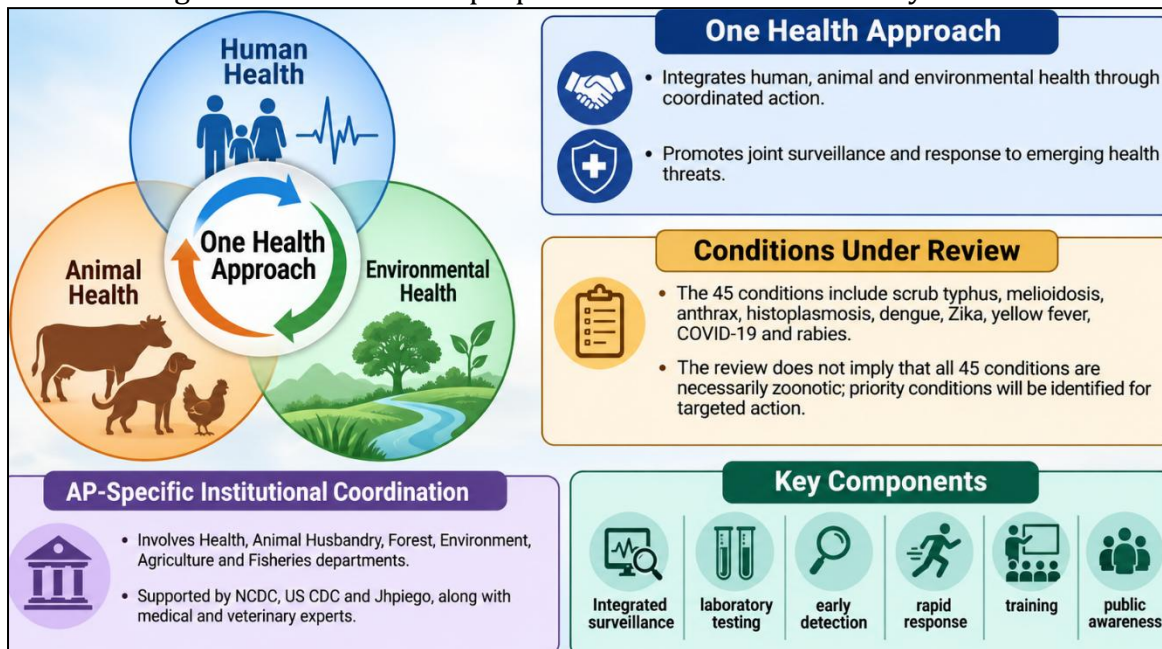
- Andhra Pradesh has begun drafting a State Action Plan on zoonotic diseases following a three-day One Health workshop in Vijayawada.
- Officials are reviewing 45 conditions to identify priority diseases for surveillance and control measures.

What are Zoonotic Diseases?

- Diseases that can be transmitted between animals and humans, directly or indirectly.
- Their emergence is influenced by interactions among humans, animals and the environment.

Significance

- Strengthens AP's outbreak preparedness and health security.



- Promotes coordinated action at the human–animal–environment interface.
- Complements India's National One Health Mission and broader One Health framework.

23. AI-Powered City Flood Alert System in Andhra Pradesh – Indian Express

Why in News?

- Andhra Pradesh is deploying “City Flood Alert”, an AI-powered urban flood forecasting system, first in Vijayawada, with plans to extend it to all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- The system is designed to provide 48-hour advance rainfall outlooks and up to 6-hour flash-flood warnings, enabling timely preventive action.

Key Features

- Digital Twin of Vijayawada: Ward-wise mapping using satellite-based Digital Elevation Models (DEM) to identify elevations, drainage channels and low-lying areas.
- Historical Data: Nearly three decades of Budameru flood data are incorporated to model water flow and inundation under different rainfall scenarios.
- Drainage Risk Mapping: Identifies silted underground and surface drainage channels that may cause waterlogging and backflow.
- Predictive Technology: Builds on Flood Astra, an urban flood-forecasting model developed by researchers at IIT Gandhinagar.

Institutional Framework

- RTGS AWARE Division – technology and predictive platform.
- APSDMA – disaster-management coordination and response.
- IIT Gandhinagar – hydrological and modelling expertise.

Significance

- Shifts disaster management from reactive relief to anticipatory action.
- Enables pre-positioning of pumps, clearing culverts, traffic diversions and targeted evacuation.
- Strengthens climate-resilient urban planning and technology-enabled governance.
- Provides a potential model for AI-driven disaster management across AP's ULBs.

24. Operation Tusker: Tackling Human–Elephant Conflict in Andhra Pradesh – Indian Express

Why in News?

- The Andhra Pradesh Forest Department successfully captured a lone wild tusker under ‘Operation Tusker’ in the Jagamarla forest near Palamaner, Chittoor district.

- The elephant had repeatedly entered villages and damaged crops along the Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary boundary, causing concern among local communities.

Key Features

- The operation involved forest personnel and five trained Kumki elephants to safely restrain the tusker.
- Crop damage was reported in parts of Bangarupalem, Palamaner, Sadum, Somala, Pakala and Pulicherla, besides areas of Tirupati.
- The captured elephant was to undergo veterinary examination before relocation.

Human–Elephant Conflict: Significance

- Highlights the growing challenge of balancing wildlife conservation with human safety and agricultural livelihoods.
- Habitat fragmentation, shrinking corridors and increasing human activity near forest edges can intensify such encounters.
- Crop losses can undermine rural livelihoods and generate negative attitudes towards wildlife conservation.

Conservation Approach

- Early-warning systems and rapid-response teams can alert communities about elephant movements.
- Protecting elephant corridors and habitats can reduce encounters.
- Timely crop-loss compensation, community participation and scientific relocation can strengthen coexistence.

25. Sacred Groves of Andhra Pradesh Under Conservation Pressure – Indian Express

Why in News?

- A recent study highlighted the ecological importance of sacred groves (Pavithranams) in Andhra Pradesh and growing threats from development and changing cultural practices.
- 730 sacred groves have been documented in the State. The Penna Ahobilam Sacred Grove in Anantapur recorded 378 plant species belonging to 220 genera and 54 families.

Ecological & Cultural Significance

- Serve as in-situ conservation sites for native and medicinal flora.
- Provide habitat for biodiversity and help regulate microclimate and store carbon.
- Preserve traditional ecological knowledge and community-based conservation practices.
- Religious beliefs and customary norms historically restricted exploitation of these forest patches.

Major Threats

- Temple expansion and modernisation, removal of native vegetation and infrastructure development.
- Erosion of traditional conservation practices due to changing cultural values and lifestyles.
- Habitat fragmentation and increasing human pressure.

Way Forward

- Recognise important groves through Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) and other appropriate conservation mechanisms; AP's Biodiversity Board has identified sacred groves among potential BHS sites.
- Strengthen Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) and community participation in protection and restoration.
- Combine scientific ecological management with traditional knowledge, while ensuring development around sacred sites remains ecologically sensitive.

26. AP-GREEN: TARGET OF 50% GREEN COVER BY 2047- The Indian Express.

Why in News?

Andhra Pradesh launched a comprehensive greening programme under **AP-GREEN — Andhra Pradesh Society for Greening and Reforestation for Ecological Enrichment**.

The long-term target is:

50% green cover by 2047 with an interim target of **33% by 2030**.

Key Features

AP-GREEN brings together departments including:

- Forest
- Agriculture
- Horticulture
- Panchayat Raj
- Rural Development
- Education
- Industries
- Water Resources
- Urban Local Bodies

It will promote:

- Farm forestry
- Agroforestry
- Avenue plantations
- Canal-bank plantations
- Shelter belts
- Urban plantations

Existing Forest Area

Andhra Pradesh has around: **37.42 lakh hectares of notified forest area** representing around **22.96% of geographical area**.

Significance

- Climate resilience.
- Carbon sequestration.
- Biodiversity conservation.
- Rural employment.
- Nature-based livelihoods.
- Soil and water conservation.

Challenges

- Plantation survival rates.
- Monoculture risks.
- Land availability.
- Human-wildlife conflict.
- Monitoring.

Way Forward

- Native species.
- GIS-based monitoring.
- Geo-tagging.
- Community participation.
- Agroforestry.
- Carbon finance.

27. "GREAT GREEN WALL" ALONG ANDHRA PRADESH COAST- *The Indian Express*.

Why in News?

Andhra Pradesh launched a major coastal ecological protection initiative known as the **Great Green Wall of Andhra Pradesh**.

The programme proposes planting approximately **55 lakh palm seedlings** across around **5,499 hectares**.

Key Features

The proposed green barrier has a three-tier approach:

First tier → Mangroves

Second tier → Palm groves

Third tier → Other vegetation/green protection

Significance

Coastal vegetation can help reduce:

- Cyclonic wind impacts
- Coastal erosion
- Storm surges
- Soil degradation

It also supports:

- Biodiversity
- Carbon sequestration
- Coastal livelihoods

Coastal Andhra → Cyclones → Mangroves → Coastal erosion → Disaster management

Challenges

- Cyclones.
- Salinity.
- Seedling mortality.
- Coastal land pressure.
- Invasive species.

Way Forward

- Native coastal species.
- Mangrove restoration.
- Community participation.
- Remote-sensing monitoring.
- Integration with disaster-management planning.

28. INDIA'S FIRST NON-GMO HIGH-EXPANSION POPCORN MAIZE HYBRID SEED- *The Indian Express.*

Why in News?

Vice-President **C. P. Radhakrishnan** launched India's first **non-GMO, high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed** at **Musunuru in Eluru district** on 24 August 2026. .

Key Features

- Indigenous technology.
- Intended to reduce dependence on imported hybrid seed technology.
- Linked with processing and value addition.

The initiative involved **Gourmet Popcornica**, an Andhra Pradesh-based enterprise.

Significance

Agriculture + biotechnology + value addition + exports

It demonstrates:

- Indigenous agricultural innovation.
- Farmer-producer-industry linkages.
- Agro-processing.
- Export potential.

Challenges

- Seed quality.
- Intellectual property.
- Climate resilience.
- Market access.
- Farmer awareness.

Way Forward

- Strengthen agricultural R&D.

- Promote seed innovation.
- Farmer training.
- Improve processing infrastructure.
- Build export-oriented value chains.

29. VELIGONDA PROJECT & WATER SECURITY -*The Indian Express.*

Why in News?

The **Pula Subbaiah Veligonda Project** was scheduled for inauguration towards the end of August 2026, with major rehabilitation and resettlement measures being undertaken for project-affected families.

Key Features

The project involves diversion of Krishna floodwaters towards the **Nallamala Sagar reservoir**.

Important figures reported in August:

- Nallamala Sagar capacity: approximately **43.50 TMC**
- Intended irrigation coverage: approximately **4.47 lakh acres**
- Significant focus on drought-prone areas.

Significance

Especially important for:

- Markapuram region
- Drought-prone western parts of Andhra Pradesh
- Irrigation
- Drinking water
- Groundwater recharge

Challenges

- Rehabilitation and resettlement.
- Displacement.
- Ecological impacts.
- Water availability.
- Inter-state river-water issues.

Way Forward

- Complete checks before full operation.
- Participatory water management.
- Efficient irrigation.
- Micro-irrigation.
- Groundwater recharge.

30. EL NIÑO, RAINFALL DEFICIT & AGRICULTURAL PREPAREDNESS- *Deccan Chronicle*

Why in News?

Andhra Pradesh intensified preparations for possible **El Niño-related rainfall deficits** during August 2026.

The State Government discussed:

- Alternative cropping
- Crop insurance
- Water conservation
- Fodder management
- Farmer advisories.

Key Measures

The State announced subsidised electricity of: **₹1.50/unit** for aqua farmers in non-aqua zones, benefiting approximately **12,500 aqua farmers**.

Other measures included:

- Crop insurance awareness.
- Alternative cropping strategies.
- Farmer advisories through Rythu App.
- Fodder management.

- Support to tobacco farmers.

Significance

Climate change + Agriculture + Disaster Management + Water security

Challenges

- Rainfall uncertainty.
- Drought.
- Groundwater depletion.
- Crop losses.
- Livestock fodder shortages.
- Aquaculture risks.

Way Forward

- Climate-resilient crops.
- Micro-irrigation.
- Watershed development.
- Crop diversification.
- Climate advisories.
- Insurance coverage.

31. LOW-COST RICE PROGRAMME IN ANDHRA PRADESH- *The Indian Express*

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh Government launched a programme to sell selected varieties of rice at controlled prices from **2 August 2026**.

Key Features

Prices announced:

- **BPT Super Fine Rice** → ₹52/kg
- **BPT Raw Rice** → ₹50/kg

Distribution points include:

- **130 Rythu Bazaars**
- Around **500 rice-mill counters**

An online monitoring platform was proposed to track:

- Sales
- Consumer purchases
- Feedback
- Stock movement

Aadhaar registration at sale counters was made mandatory.

Significance

The programme aims to improve access to affordable food while maintaining quality standards.

It connects with:

Food security + consumer welfare + agricultural marketing

Challenges

- Targeting genuine beneficiaries.
- Quality control.
- Diversion of stocks.
- Supply-chain management.
- Digital exclusion.

Way Forward

- Real-time stock monitoring.
- Transparent procurement.
- Quality testing.
- Consumer grievance mechanisms.

32. PLOT-LEVEL CROP MONITORING — “RYTHANNA MEEKOSAM”- *The Indian Express*

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Department launched a plot-level monitoring campaign called **“Rythanna Meekosam”** on 7 August 2026 amid rainfall deficits.

Key Features

The programme uses:

- Dynamic risk grading.
- Targeted crop advisories.
- Satellite tracking.
- Field-level verification.
- e-Crop database.
- Digital applications.

The department categorised **8,489 Rythu Seva Kendras** into risk tiers.

The campaign moved from broad area-level assessment towards **plot-by-plot verification**.

Significance:

Localised + Real-time + Data-driven information--->more effective agricultural policy framework.

Challenges

- Accuracy of satellite data.
- Digital infrastructure.
- Field-level verification.
- Farmer digital literacy.

Way Forward

Satellite imagery + GIS + field verification + AI + farmer feedback>>>> climate smart agriculture.

33. FIVE-POINT STRATEGY AGAINST EL NIÑO — AGRICULTURE- Deccan Chronicle

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh Government unveiled a **Five-Point Strategy** in August to address drought-like conditions associated with a major rainfall deficit.

Key Features

The strategy emphasised:

1. Strengthening local **Raitanna Mee Kosam** committees.
2. Crop protection.
3. Water conservation.
4. Maximum crop-insurance enrolment.
5. Localised agricultural advisories.

The government projected rainfall during June–December 2026 at around **557 mm**, compared with an expected **867 mm**, according to the report.

Significance

The policy demonstrates a shift from:

Post-disaster relief → Anticipatory climate-risk management

Challenges

- Rainfall uncertainty.
- Crop losses.
- Drinking-water shortages.
- Livestock stress.
- Reduced reservoir inflows.

Way Forward

- Climate-resilient agriculture.
- Crop diversification.
- Water budgeting.
- Micro-irrigation.
- Insurance.
- Early-warning systems.

ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT

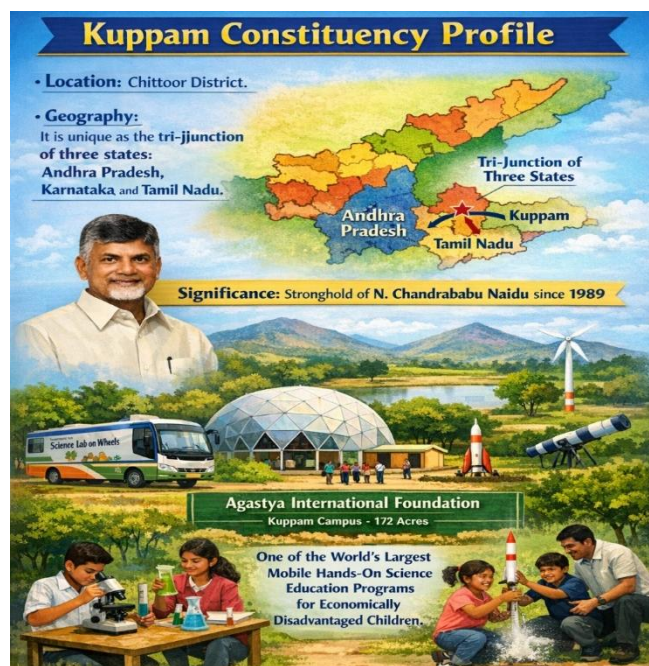
1. Kuppam: The "Laboratory" of Andhra's Developmental Model

Context:

During his three-day visit to the Kuppam constituency in January 2026, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu inaugurated several developmental projects. He declared Kuppam as a "Model Laboratory" for the state, where innovative technologies and pilot projects in education and tourism will be tested before statewide implementation.

Key Highlights of the Visit

- **The "Kuppam Model" of Governance:**
 - ✓ **Pilot Hub:** The CM emphasized that Kuppam will serve as a testing ground for new government initiatives. Successful pilot projects here will be scaled up across Andhra Pradesh.
 - ✓ **Focus Areas:** The primary focus is on raising Educational Standards and promoting Tourism through modern infrastructure.
- **Educational Infrastructure (Agastya Vidyachal Academy):**
 - ✓ **Inauguration:** The CM inaugurated the Agastya Vidyachal Academy in Gudipalli, built at a cost of ₹3 Crore.
 - ✓ **Teachers' Training Centre:** A state-of-the-art facility (11,000 sq. ft.) was launched to train 5,000 teachers and school leaders annually. The focus is on "Experiential Learning" (learning by doing) and scientific teaching methods rather than rote learning.
 - ✓ **Learners' Accommodation:** Foundation stone laid for a ₹10 Crore facility to host national-level training programs, increasing capacity from 240 to higher numbers.
- **Tourism & Skill Development:**
 - ✓ **Oberoi Visitors Centre:** The CM laid the foundation for the Oberoi Visitors Centre (Investment: ₹2 Crore).
 - ✓ **Objective:** Designed to offer a multimedia-based learning and visitor experience, boosting the tourism potential of the constituency.
 - ✓ **Future Readiness:** The CM urged students to embrace innovation and technology, positioning them as the drivers of the state's future economy.



2. Economic Survey 2025-26: AP's Strategic Reforms and Urban Vision

Context:

The Economic Survey 2025-26, tabled in Parliament, highlighted Andhra Pradesh's significant strides in investment reforms, inflation control, and the strategic development of its capital, Amaravati. The survey praised the state's Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) implementation and its successful digital land resurvey initiative.

Key Highlights of the Survey:

- **Investment Reforms & Ease of Doing Business:**
 - ✓ **Digital Clearances:** The survey noted that Andhra Pradesh has successfully implemented Single-Window Industrial Clearances and e-Environmental Approvals under BRAP 2024.
 - ✓ **Pollution Control:** The state has expanded its Online Consent Management & Monitoring System. This allows industries to apply for consent and track approvals digitally, reducing human interface and enhancing transparency with the Pollution Control Board.

- ✓ **Sustainability:** Along with Tamil Nadu and Kerala, AP was lauded for integrating sustainability measures into its business environment, reducing the time taken for green clearances.
- **Urban Development: Amaravati & Ease of Living:**
 - ✓ **Amaravati as a Greenfield Opportunity:** The survey termed the construction of Amaravati as a "rare window of opportunity." Unlike older cities that retrofit infrastructure after congestion sets in, Amaravati offers the chance to shape growth deliberately from scratch, avoiding the pitfalls of informality and service deficits.
 - ✓ **Top Cities:** Tirupati and Vijayawada featured among the Top 10 Ease of Living Cities in India.
 - ✓ **Reason:** These Tier-2 cities possess foundational infrastructure but have not yet faced the intense population pressure of metros like Bengaluru or Delhi, allowing them to remain "ahead of the curve."
- **Macroeconomic Stability: Decline in Inflation**
 - ✓ **Sharp Decline:** The survey highlighted a drastic reduction in the state's inflation rate.
 - ✓ 2022-23: 7.57%
 - ✓ 2025-26 (April-Dec): 1.39%
 - ✓ **Significance:** A low inflation rate below the national average indicates better supply chain management and effective price monitoring mechanisms in the state.
- **Land Governance: The Drone Resurvey**
 - ✓ **Technology Use:** The survey commended the Andhra Pradesh Resurvey Project for using Drones, CORS (Continuously Operating Reference Station), and GIS mapping.
 - ✓ **Impact:** As of 2025:
 - 6,901 villages covered.
 - 81 lakh land parcels resurveyed.
 - 86,000 boundary disputes resolved.
 - ✓ **Outcome:** Issuance of tamper-proof digital land titles.

Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP)

Nodal Agency: DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Objective: To rank states based on the implementation of business reforms (Ease of Doing Business)

Parameters: Single Window System, Land Availability, Enforcing Contracts, etc.



Inflation Measurement

CPI (Consumer Price Index): **1.39%** (CPI-Combined)

Target: RBI's Target 4% (+/- 2%)

Current Rate: **1.39%** - Well Below Upper Tolerance Limit



Smart Cities Mission & Ease of Living Index

Ministry: MoHUA

Ease of Living Index (EoLI):

- Quality of Life
- Economic Ability
- Sustainability
- Citizen Perception Survey



3. Decentralized Growth: AP Identifies 22 Industrial Clusters for Mega Job Drive

Context:

Recently, HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh announced in the Legislative Assembly the identification of 22 specialized industrial clusters across Andhra Pradesh. This cluster-based approach aims to fulfill the state government's flagship promise of creating 20 lakh jobs within five years.

I. Key Highlights: Sector-Specific Regional Mapping

- **Rayalaseema Region:**
 - **Anantapur:** Automotive Cluster.
 - **Kurnool:** Renewable Energy and Cement Cluster.
 - **Kadapa & Chittoor:** Electronics Manufacturing Clusters.
- **Coastal & Central AP:**
 - **Nellore:** Glass and Air Conditioner (AC) Cluster.
 - **Prakasam:** Compressed Biogas (CBG) Cluster.
 - **Amaravati:** Quantum Computing Cluster.
 - **Godavari Districts:** Aqua Cluster.
- **North Coastal AP:** Dedicated clusters for Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices Manufacturing, and Steel.
- **Frontier Tech:** Dedicated hubs for a Drone City and a Space City are also in the active planning phase.

II. The 'Ancillary Unit' Strategy:

- **Beyond Basic Manufacturing:** The core philosophy of this policy is not just attracting a single large factory, but bringing its entire supply chain (ancillary units) into the same geographical cluster to heavily multiply local job creation.

III. AP as India's AC Manufacturing Hub:

- **Market Dominance:** Andhra Pradesh currently manufactures 50% of all air conditioners produced in India.
- **Future Target:** With companies like Daikin, LG Electronics, and Blue Star expanding, the state aims to push this share to 70% within the next two years.
- **Industry-Academia Linkage:** These MNCs have requested direct linkages with local Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). They will provide the curriculum and equipment to ensure students are immediately employable upon graduation.

IV. Constituency-Level Employment Drive:

- **Decentralized Hiring:** The government has mandated conducting job melas in every single constituency once every three months.
- **Current Impact:** Through 1,587 job fairs involving over 11,300 companies, more than 1.08 lakh youth have already secured placements.

V. Economic Geography & Policy Framework:

Dimension	Relevance / Definition
Cluster-Based Development	An economic geography concept coined by Michael Porter. It refers to a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field. It increases local productivity and drives innovation.
Skill Gap & Demographic Dividend	India possesses a demographic dividend (a young working-age population), but suffers from a "skill gap" where graduates lack industry-ready skills. Linking ITIs directly to AC manufacturers bridges this gap.
AP Reorganisation Act, 2014	Section 93 and Schedule XIII mandate the Central Government to take all necessary measures for the industrialization and economic growth of the successor State of AP, making state-level cluster initiatives vital for securing central manufacturing incentives.

4. Macro-Economic Snapshot: AP Ranks 8th Nationally in GSDP

Context:

Recently, the Planning Department released a comparative analysis of Andhra Pradesh's economy for the 2025–26 fiscal year. Despite significant fiscal deficits and high debt-to-GSDP ratios, the state has outperformed the national growth average, driven by robust performance in the services and agriculture sectors.

I. Key Macroeconomic Indicators (2025–26):

- **National Ranking:** Andhra Pradesh currently ranks 8th in India in terms of GSDP.
- **Economic Size:** The state's GSDP is estimated at ₹17,62,357 crore, reflecting a nominal growth of 10.75%.
- **Growth Rate (At Constant Prices):** AP recorded a growth of 9.88%, significantly higher than India's national GDP growth of 7.4%.
- **Per Capita Income (PCI):** Rose to ₹2,94,507, marking a 10.43% increase from the previous year (₹2,66,699).

II. Fiscal Health & Challenges:

- **Debt Burden:** Total debt stands at 35% of GSDP, a critical figure for debt-sustainability analysis.
- **Revenue Profile:** Own Tax Revenue (OTR) is ₹1,05,331 crore. Notably, AP's own revenue is only 7.6% of GSDP, lower than peers like Odisha (13.3%) and Chhattisgarh (12%), indicating a heavy reliance on Central Transfers.
- **Expenditure Pattern:** Total expenditure is ₹1,97,950 crore.
 - **Revenue Expenditure:** 90% (indicates high spending on salaries, pensions, and interest).
 - **Capital Expenditure:** Only 10% (suggests a need for more asset-creating investments).
- **Deficit Status:** The state faces a Revenue Deficit of ₹60,481 crore and a Fiscal Deficit of ₹85,269 crore.

III. Sectoral Growth and Agriculture Performance:

- **Sectoral Growth Rates:**
 - **Services:** 10.67% (Leading sector)
 - **Agriculture & Allied:** 10.14%
 - **Industry:** 9.15%
- **Agricultural Output:** Rice production saw a significant jump of 15.3% (reaching 146.09 lakh tonnes), while Maize production grew by 18.9%.

5. AP Budget 2026–27: A ₹3.32 Lakh Crore Roadmap for 'Swarna Andhra'

Context:

In early 2026, the Andhra Pradesh government tabled a ₹3,32,162 crore budget for the 2026–27 fiscal year. The budget marks a strategic pivot from purely consumption-oriented spending to wealth creation, characterized by a sharp increase in capital expenditure and urban infrastructure, particularly for the state capital, Amaravati.

I. Key Budgetary Highlights & Sectoral Allocations

The budget is structured around the "Swarna Andhra" vision, focusing on long-term asset building:

- **Total Budget Size:** ₹3,32,162 Crore.
- **Welfare Sector (Social Justice):** BC Welfare: ₹51,012 crore (The highest-ever allocation for Backward Classes).
 - **SC/ST/Minority Welfare:** Substantial outlays aimed at saturation-level implementation of welfare schemes.
- **Education & Human Capital:**
 - **School Education:** ₹32,308 crore.
 - Focus on infrastructure upgrades in government schools and digitizing classrooms.

➤ **Infrastructure & Urban Development (MA&UD):**

- Amaravati Development: Earmarked ₹6,000 crore as the "lion's share" to accelerate capital city construction.

➤ **Water Resources (Irrigation):**

- Allocation: ₹18,223 crore.
- Priority: Reviving stalled projects and completing the Polavaram project distribution canals.

Dimension	Constitutional / Legal Relevance
	Article 202: Requires the Governor to cause to be laid before the House the estimated receipts and expenditure (Budget) for the year.
	Consolidated Fund: All revenues received by the Government, loans raised, and recoveries of loans form the Consolidated Fund of the State (Article 266).
	Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act. The 2026-27 budget must align with these targets to ensure the state's debt-to-GSDP ratio remains sustainable.
	Article 206: If the budget is not passed before April 1st, the House passes a 'Vote on Account' to draw money for essential spending for a limited period.

II. Strategic Dimensions:

- **Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) vs. Revenue Expenditure:** The budget signals a shift toward Wealth Creation. By increasing CAPEX, the state aims to create physical assets (roads, irrigation, capital city) that generate long-term economic returns and jobs.
- **Fiscal Consolidation:** While spending is high, the budget includes a roadmap to bring the Fiscal Deficit within the 3.5% limit prescribed by the FRBM Act over the medium term.
- **Integrated Welfare:** The ₹51,012 crore for BC welfare is not just for doles but includes "Self-Employment" and "Skill Development" components to move beneficiaries toward economic independence.

6. Andhra Pradesh's Fiscal Tightrope and the Amaravati Resurgence

Context:

The Cabinet of Andhra Pradesh, under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, has underscored a significant truth concerning the financial condition of the state while also establishing a clear direction for its administrative future. This dual emphasis on severe fiscal limitations and the formal establishment of Amaravati signifies a crucial juncture in the state's agenda for 2026.

I. The Fiscal Crisis: Income vs. Expenditure

The Chief Minister disclosed a difficult budgetary situation that highlights the restricted fiscal capacity of the state:

- **The 99% Reality:** At present, 99% of the state's internally generated revenue is allocated to salaries and pensions.
- **Debt Servicing:** The financial support obtained from the Central Government is primarily directed towards servicing the interest on past loans, instead of being invested in new capital projects.
- **Efficiency in Welfare:** In spite of these challenges, the administration is focusing on "effective delivery," striving to maintain welfare programs through stringent financial oversight and enhanced central grants.

II. Amaravati: Towards Legal Sanctity

- A major administrative shift is currently in progress to establish legal and parliamentary legitimacy for Amaravati as the exclusive capital of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Parliamentary Resolution:** Acting on the counsel from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the State Assembly is set to pass a formal resolution designating Amaravati—specifically within the jurisdiction of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA)—as the official capital.
- **The 2014 vs. 2026 Distinction:** In contrast to the broader proposal for the "Vijayawada-Guntur region" from 2014, the resolution of 2026 delineates specific geographical and legal parameters to eliminate any potential for future confusion.
- **Timeline for Formalization:**
 - **March 28, 2026:** The resolution will be adopted in the State Assembly.
 - **April 1, 2026:** The Union Cabinet will evaluate the proposal.
 - **Ongoing Session:** An amendment bill will be introduced in Parliament to confer permanent status.

III. Political Expansion and Delimitation:

The Cabinet also deliberated on the forthcoming delimitation exercise, which is anticipated to significantly influence the legislative framework of the state. The Chief Minister suggested that the number of Assembly seats might rise by 50%, a change that would fundamentally transform political engagement and administrative representation throughout the districts.

IV. The Cabinet Briefing:

- **Economic:** Revenue Receipts are almost entirely diverted to non-productive expenditure (salaries/pensions).
- **Federal:** Direct coordination with the PMO for a Central Amendment Bill on the State Capital.
- **Administrative:** Transition from a "Three-Capital Model" back to a single, legally-fortified "Amaravati Model."
- **Political:** Anticipated 50% increase in legislative seats via the Delimitation process.

V. The Path Ahead: Stability and Growth

- The strategy of the government centers on conveying the "historical and developmental importance" of Amaravati in order to foster public agreement.
- By obtaining support from parliament, the state seeks to draw in international investments that have remained dormant due to uncertainties surrounding the capital city over the past few years.

The state is fundamentally in a 'Recovery Phase.' By prioritizing the resolution of the capital's legal status, the government is striving to establish a stable framework for Private-Public Partnerships (PPP), which are crucial given that the state's internal revenue is presently encumbered by ongoing expenditures.

7. NITI Aayog's 'Divya Bharat' Report: Andhra Pradesh as a Premier Tourism Hub Context:

NITI Aayog's most recent tourism anthology, "Divya Bharat – A Window to the Soul of India," includes an extensive 13-page report that emphasizes Andhra Pradesh as a dynamic, year-round tourist destination. The report commends the state's distinctive combination of natural splendor, historical heritage, spiritual significance, and diverse culinary practices.

- **The 'Divya Bharat' Framework:**
 - ✓ Initiative: A premier publication from NITI Aayog aimed at enhancing both domestic and international tourism through the presentation of travel narratives specific to each state.
 - ✓ Optimal Season: The report suggests that the ideal period for experiencing the varied landscapes of Andhra Pradesh is from October to February.
 - ✓ Strategic Goal: This initiative is in line with the state's objective to improve infrastructure, confer industry status upon tourism, and establish itself as a leading travel destination in India by the year 2030.

Key Tourism Dimensions

- **Nature & Eco-Tourism:**
 - ✓ Hill Stations: Araku Valley, Lambasingi (often referred to as the Kashmir of Andhra Pradesh), Maredumilli, and Horsley Hills.
 - ✓ Caves & Waterfalls: The impressive limestone formations found in Borra Caves, the extensive Belum Caves, and the picturesque Talakona Waterfalls.
 - ✓ Wetlands & Wildlife: Kolleru Lake (a freshwater body), Pulicat Lake (which has brackish water), and wildlife sanctuaries such as Kambalakonda and Coringa Mangroves.
 - ✓ Coastal Charm: Tranquil beaches like Rushikonda and Suryalanka, in addition to the distinctive red sand dunes of Erramatti Dibbalu.
- **Spiritual Tourism (Pilgrimage):**
 - ✓ Global Shrines: The highly esteemed Tirumala Venkateswara Temple and the Srisailem Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple (a Jyotirlinga).
 - ✓ Historic Temples: Kanaka Durga Temple (located in Vijayawada), Simhachalam Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Temple, and Annavaram Satyanarayana Swamy Temple.
- **Heritage & Historical Landmarks:**
 - ✓ Forts: The magnificent Chandragiri Fort, Kondapalli Fort, and the renowned "Grand Canyon of India" at Gandikota.
 - ✓ Ancient Art & Architecture: The detailed Lepakshi Temple, the rock-cut caves of Undavalli, and the Buddhist heritage site at Amaravati.
- **Living Culture & Culinary Identity:**
 - ✓ Handlooms & Crafts: The GI-tagged Kondapalli toys, Kalamkari textiles, and the exquisite weaves such as Uppada Jamdani, Mangalagiri, and Venkatagiri.
 - ✓ Gastronomy: Notable Andhra dishes including Gongura Pachadi, Pootharekulu (a type of paper sweet), Pesarattu, and the spicy Andhra Chicken Curry.

8. Carrier Global's Rs 1,000 Cr Unit in Sri City & AP's Industrial Push

Context:

Andhra Pradesh is rapidly transforming into India's digital and manufacturing powerhouse. Recently, IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh laid the foundation for a major Carrier Global project, significantly boosting the state's industrial landscape.

Key Highlights:

- **Major Investment:** Carrier Global is setting up a new air-conditioner manufacturing unit worth Rs 1,000 crore.
- **Project Location:** This state-of-the-art facility is situated in Sri City, Tirupati district.
- **Job Creation:** The upcoming project is expected to generate livelihood opportunities for around 3,000 people.
- **State Vision:** The AP government aims to position the state as the "Cool Capital of India".
- **Manufacturing Targets:** Sri City aims to meet 60% of India's AC demand by 2027 and 80% by 2028.
- **New Tech Initiative:** Launch of 'Naipunyam', India's first Conversational AI-based Skill Assessment Platform.
- **Ecosystem Growth:** AP is actively building an entire ecosystem for data centers and advanced cooling technologies.

Core definitions:

- **Sri City:** A prominent Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Integrated Business City in Tirupati district.
- **Industrial Success:** It is a flagship hub representing both "Make in India" and "Made in AP" initiatives.
- **HVAC Sector:** The acronym stands for Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning.

- Cabinet Portfolios: Minister Nara Lokesh holds the Human Resources Development (HRD), IT, and Electronics portfolios.
- Geography: Tirupati district was officially formed in April 2022 during the AP district reorganization.

9. ANDHRA PRADESH ECONOMIC GROWTH — GSDP- Deccan Chronicle

Why in News?

The July 2026 Monthly Economic Report indicated that Andhra Pradesh's real GSDP growth had increased from: **6.5% in 2023–24 → 9.9% in 2025–26**

Key Features

Growth was reported across:

- Agriculture
- Industry
- Services

The State Government also asked officials to prepare contingency plans considering the El Niño situation.

Significance

GSDP is the state-level counterpart of GDP.

It measures the value of goods and services produced within the state's economic territory.

Challenges

High growth has to be accompanied by:

- Employment generation.
- Regional balance.
- Agricultural resilience.
- Investment quality.
- Human development.

Way Forward

Growth + Employment + Productivity + Human Development + Environmental sustainability>>> increase in GSDP of a state.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Andhra Pradesh — First State with Dedicated Quantum Computing Policy Andhra Pradesh has positioned itself as an early mover in quantum technology policy. During discussions on the Amaravati Quantum Valley, officials highlighted that AP had introduced a dedicated quantum computing policy.

Policy Focus

- Quantum hardware
- Quantum software
- Research
- Skill development
- Startups
- Industry partnerships
- Manufacturing ecosystem.

Significance

Quantum technology is considered strategically important because of its applications in:

- Cybersecurity
- Defence
- Drug discovery
- Financial modelling
- Optimisation
- Communication.

2. Twin AI Centres — Amaravati & Visakhapatnam

Why in News?

In July 2026, Andhra Pradesh launched two AI Centres of Excellence in:

1. Amaravati
2. Visakhapatnam

The centres were launched on 28 July 2026.

The centres are associated with:

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- AP Department of IT, Electronics & Communications
- Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH).

They are designed to provide:

- High-performance GPU computing
- AI sandboxes
- Mentorship
- Industry connections
- Commercialisation support
- Infrastructure for DeepTech startups.

3. Andhra Pradesh Semiconductor Ecosystem — Visakhapatnam

Why in News?

Andhra Pradesh advanced its semiconductor manufacturing ambitions in 2026 with the proposed OSAT facility at Tarluvada, Visakhapatnam district.

OSAT = Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test

It is an important part of the semiconductor value chain

Semiconductor value chain

Design → Fabrication → Assembly → Packaging → Testing → Market

The facility is associated with semiconductor:

- Assembly

- Packaging
- Testing.
- Later Development

The facility was described as the first semiconductor plant in South India approved under the India Semiconductor Mission, with planned capacity of about 96 million chips annually once operational.

Why important?

India has historically had major dependence on imported semiconductor components.

Domestic OSAT capacity can strengthen:

- Electronics manufacturing
- Semiconductor supply chains
- AI hardware ecosystem
- Automobile electronics
- Telecommunications
- Defence electronics.

4. Sriharikota — Third Launch Pad

Why in News?

The Government of India approved establishment of a Third Launch Pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

The third launch pad will support:

- Next Generation Launch Vehicles
- Increased launch frequency
- Future human-spaceflight/large-launch requirements
- Expansion of India's space infrastructure.

Target: 2029–30

5. First Private Orbital Launch from Indian Soil — Sriharikota

Why in News?

On 18 July 2026, Skyroot Aerospace launched Vikram-I from Sriharikota.

ISRO described it as the first orbital launch by a private Indian company from Indian soil.

Key Facts

- Company: Skyroot Aerospace
 - Rocket: Vikram-I
 - Launch location: Satish Dhawan Space Centre
 - Date: 18 July 2026
 - Type: Orbital launch
 - Significance: First private Indian company to undertake an orbital launch from Indian soil.
- Two satellites mentioned by ISRO:
- SCOPE
 - Grahaa
- They were injected into Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE POLICIES AND SCHEMES

1. Annadata Sukhibhava — PM-KISAN Convergence

Sector: Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

- **OBJECTIVE:** Financial assistance to eligible farmers through DBT. Intended to support farmers with input costs such as seeds, fertilisers and other agricultural requirements.
- State assistance: **₹14,000 per farmer per year.**
- Along with **₹6,000 under PM-KISAN**, total support is **₹20,000 per year.**
- In March 2026, the State announced release of the third instalment.
- 2026-27 Budget allocation for Annadata Sukhibhava: **₹6,600 crore.**

2. Thalliki Vandanam

Sector: School Education

- Major education-support scheme of Andhra Pradesh.
- Provides **₹15,000 per child per year** to eligible mothers/guardians.
- Applicable to students from **Classes I–XII, including Intermediate.**
- Covers recognised:
 - Government schools
 - Aided schools
 - Private unaided schools
 - Residential schools/junior colleges.
- For 2026-27, the State earmarked around **₹10,120.78 crore.**
- **Important exclusion:** students already covered under certain fee-reimbursement schemes such as ITI, Polytechnic and RGUKT are excluded.

3. Deepam 2.0

Sector: Women Welfare / Energy

- **OBJECTIVE:** Provides subsidised/free LPG support to eligible households. Intended to reduce the household burden of cooking fuel.
- Focuses particularly on women and economically vulnerable households.
- The 2026 welfare framework continued to treat clean cooking fuel as a major component of household welfare.

4. Stree Shakti

Sector: Women / Transport

- **OBJECTIVE:** Provides **free bus travel for women** in Andhra Pradesh.
- Implemented through APSRTC.
- **Intended to:**
 - Improve women's mobility
 - Reduce transportation expenditure
 - Increase access to education and employment
 - Improve access to health and public services.
- 2026-27 Budget provision: approximately **₹1,420 crore.**

5. NTR Bharosa Pension Scheme

Sector: Social Security

- Major social-security pension programme of Andhra Pradesh.
- Covers vulnerable groups such as:
 - Senior citizens
 - Widows
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Other eligible categories.

- Pension amount for major categories was enhanced to **₹4,000 per month**.
- 2026-27 allocation: approximately **₹27,719 crore**.
- The scheme continued to be one of the largest welfare expenditure heads of the State.

6. Matsyakarula Sevalo

Sector: Fisheries

- Welfare scheme for fishing families.
- Provides assistance during the annual fishing-ban period.
- Assistance reported at **₹20,000 per eligible fishing family**.
- 2026-27 allocation included support for:
 - Fishermen welfare
 - Diesel subsidy
 - Fishing boats
 - Fishing harbours
 - Fish landing centres.

7. Zero Poverty – P4 Programme

Sector: Poverty Eradication / Governance

- Linked to **Swarna Andhra Vision@2047**.
- Objective: **eradicate poverty in Andhra Pradesh by 2029**.
- P4 = **Public – Private – People – Partnership**.
- Identifies economically/socially stronger families as **Margadarsis**.
- They are encouraged to support vulnerable **Bangaru Kutumbalu**.
- Emphasis is not merely on financial assistance but on:
 - Livelihood improvement
 - Skill development
 - Social support
 - Access to government services.

8. Akshara Andhra

Sector: Adult Literacy

- **OBJECTIVE:** State initiative for achieving **100% adult literacy**.
- Aligned with the Government of India's **ULLAS** programme.
- Implemented in phases.
- **Phase-II** focuses on expanding literacy among adult non-literates.
- Long-term target: **100% adult literacy by 2029**.

9. Pillale Sampada Initiative

Sector: Population / Demography

Launched in July 2026

- **Pillale Sampada = “Children are Wealth.”**
- Represents a policy discussion around **population conservation**, rather than population control.
- Background:
 - Declining fertility
 - Ageing population
 - Shrinking working-age population
 - Future human-resource requirements.
- Focus areas include:
 - Women's health
 - Women's education
 - Maternal and child health

- Nutrition
- Childcare
- Family support.
- The initiative was launched on **World Population Day, 11 July 2026.**

10. Poshan-Shiksha-Suraksha Package

OBJECTIVE: Support for families with additional children.

Components

Poshan

- Proposed nutritional support.
- Direct financial support linked to child nutrition/immunisation.

Shiksha

- Educational support for children.

Suraksha

- Health-insurance/social-protection support.

11. AP Public-Private Partnership Policy 2026

Sector: Infrastructure / Investment

Approved & issued in August 2026

- OBJECTIVE: Intended to accelerate infrastructure development through Public-Private Partnerships.
- **Major target sectors:**
 - Transport
 - Logistics
 - Ports
 - Airports
 - Urban infrastructure
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Renewable energy
 - Tourism.
- Designed around the broader **Swarna Andhra Vision@2047.**

12. PM Surya Ghar — 100% Subsidy for SC/ST Households in AP

Sector: Renewable Energy / Social Justice

- Andhra Pradesh implemented a special support mechanism for SC/ST households under **PM Surya Ghar.**
- In the reported first phase in West Godavari:
 - **22,855 SC/ST families** targeted.
 - About **₹260.18 crore** project value.
 - Rooftop solar systems of around **2 kW** capacity.
- Central subsidy: **₹60,000** under PM Surya Ghar.
- State government provides the remaining eligible support for the targeted beneficiaries.
- Objective:
 - Reduce electricity expenditure
 - Promote renewable energy
 - Improve energy access for vulnerable households.

13. Sanjeevani Digital Health Records

Sector: Health / Digital Governance

- Andhra Pradesh has been developing a statewide **Sanjeevani Digital Health Records** system.
- **Objective:**
 - Digitisation of health records

- Better continuity of treatment
- Data-driven healthcare
- Integration of health information.

14. Yogandhra-2026

Sector: Health / Wellness

- Statewide programme associated with **International Day of Yoga**.
- Conducted during **7-21 June 2026**.
- **Focus:**
 - Yoga
 - Preventive healthcare
 - Public participation
 - Healthy lifestyle.
- Large-scale citizen participation and registration were targeted.
- District administrations were instructed to organise yoga activities at:
 - Village level
 - Mandal level
 - Municipal level.
- Activities also included quizzes, painting and essay competitions.

15. Free Bus Travel for Persons with Disabilities

Sector: Social Justice / Transport

- Andhra Pradesh expanded free public-transport support to persons with disabilities and eligible accompanying persons.
- The initiative has been referred to as **Divyang Shakthi / Indra Dhanussu** in 2026 government communications.
- Objective:
 - Mobility
 - Social inclusion
 - Access to education, healthcare and employment.

GI TAGS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

1. Ponduru Khadi

Why in News?

- **Ponduru Khadi**, from **Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh**, received major attention in January 2026 following the announcement of its GI recognition.
- GI tag was granted on **16 January 2026**.
- Registration was awarded in favour of the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**.

Significance:

- Protects the geographical identity of the traditional product.
- Provides legal protection against misuse of the geographical name.
- Supports traditional artisans and weavers.
- Can improve market recognition and branding.
- Provides scope for domestic and international market expansion.

Traditional Name:

- Ponduru Khadi is locally known as **“Patnulu.”**
- It is a traditional hand-woven cotton fabric.

Raw Materials:

- Hill cotton
- Punasa cotton
- Red cotton

Khadi and Village Industries Commission — KVIC

- The GI registration is in favour of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.
- KVIC functions under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- It is responsible for promotion and development of khadi and village industries.

2. GI e-Filing Portal

Why in News?

- On **15 September 2026 — GI Day**, the **GI e-Filing Portal** was officially launched.
- It was launched by the Secretary, DPIIT.
- The portal enables online filing of GI applications.
- It is intended to provide a more streamlined and user-friendly digital platform for GI-related filings.
- Alongside the portal, **Draft Guidelines for Geographical Indications** were also published.

Significance

- Digitisation of GI registration processes.
- Easier access for applicants.
- Reduced dependence on physical filing.
- Greater transparency and convenience.
- Potentially useful for producer organisations, cooperatives, artisans and farmer groups seeking GI protection.

MISCELLANEOUS

PADMA AWARDEES 2026 FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

The Padma Awards 2026 were announced on 25 January 2026. The President approved 131 Padma Awards, comprising 5 Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan and 113 Padma Shri, including 16 posthumous awards. The official Andhra Pradesh list contained five awardees.

1. GADDE BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD – PADMA SHRI

Why in News?

- Field: Arts.
- He is a prominent Telugu film actor.
- He was born in Patamata Lanka, Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, in 1955.
- He entered the film industry in the 1970s and has worked across multiple Indian languages.
- His Padma recognition is for his contribution to the field of Art/Cinema.

Career highlights

- Entered the film industry in 1977.
- Has acted in more than 286 films across six languages, according to the official Padma citation.
- Received several Nandi Awards from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- Has also been involved in theatre and social-service activities.
- Served as President of the Movie Artists Association (MAA) in 2015.
- Noted movies: ladies tailor, joker, aa naluguru, aha naa pellanta, etc.

2. MAGANTI MURALI MOHAN – PADMA SHRI

Why in News?

- Field: Arts.
- He is known as a Telugu film actor, producer and entrepreneur.
- He was born at Guntupalli, Andhra Pradesh, in 1940.

Film career

- Entered the film industry in 1973.
- Has acted in more than 350 films, according to the official Padma citation.
- Established Jayabheri Art Productions.
- Produced films in Telugu and Kannada.
- Received the Nandi State Award for Best Actor.
- Noted movies: varalabbai, needa, nippulanti nijam.

Social service

- Established the Murali Mohan Charitable Trust.

The Trust has supported:

- Meritorious students from economically weaker backgrounds
- Medical camps
- Women's health initiatives
- Cancer-awareness activities
- School for the Blind
- Accident victims.

Political association

- Served as a Member of Parliament from Rajahmundry in 2014.
- His role in the 2015 Godavari Pushkaram was also noted in the official Padma citation.

3. PROF. VEMPATY KUTUMBA SASTRY- PADMA SHRI

Why in News?

- Field: Literature and Education.

- He is an internationally recognised Sanskrit scholar.
- He was born in Gudlavalleru, Andhra Pradesh, in 1950.
- Specialisation: Sanskrit, Indian philosophy and Advaita Vedanta.
- Academic contribution
- Holds advanced qualifications in Sanskrit and philosophy.
- Important positions
- He has served in important academic positions including:
 - Vice-Chancellor of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi
 - Vice-Chancellor of Sree Somnath Sanskrit University, Gujarat
 - Founding Vice-Chancellor of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, now Central Sanskrit University.
 - Chancellor of Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya.

4. GARIMELLA BALAKRISHNA PRASAD – PADMA SHRI POSTHUMOUS

Why in News?

- Field: Arts.
- He was a renowned classical and devotional vocalist, composer and Vaggeyakara.
- He was particularly associated with the revival and popularisation of the compositions of Tallapaka Annamacharya.
- Joined the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Annamacharya Project in 1978.
- Served the project for nearly three decades.
- Later continued association with TTD in different capacities.
- Held the title of Asthana Vidwan.
- Other recognition
- Received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2020.
- Was associated with the propagation of Annamacharya's compositions across India.
- Passed away on 9 March 2025.
- His son Garimella Anil Kumar received the Padma Shri on his behalf.

5. DR. NORI DATTATREYUDU- PADMA BHUSHAN

- Field: Medicine.
- The official Padma list records his State/Country as United States of America, because he is an Indian-American physician.
- However, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh described him as an eminent Indian-American radiation oncologist who hails from Mantada village in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh.

NATIONAL TEACHER'S AWARDS 2026

1. RAJESH KOULURI

Why in News?

- Rajesh Kouluri, a teacher from Andhra Pradesh, was selected for the National Teachers' Awards 2026, presented on Teachers' Day, 5 September 2026.
- He teaches at Mandal Parishad Primary School, Chinamallupeta, in Vizianagaram district.
- He was the only government-school teacher from Andhra Pradesh among the 48 National Teachers' Award 2026 awardees.

JEEVAN RAKSHA PADAK SERIES 2025 AWARDS ANNOUNCED IN 2026

Why in News?

- On **25 January 2026**, the President approved the **Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards-2025**.
- **What is Jeevan Raksha Padak?**
- **It recognises acts of meritorious conduct involving saving human life.**
- There are three categories:
 1. Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak
 2. Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak
 3. Jeevan Raksha Padak
- Two Andhra Pradesh persons Netala Madhu and Potluri Krishnanjaneyulu were included in the **Jeevan Raksha Padak** category.

TELUGU BHASHA PURASKARAM 2026

1. Dr P. Vijaya Kumar

Why in News?

- **Dr P. Vijaya Kumar** received the **Andhra Pradesh Government's Telugu Bhasha Puraskaram - 2026**.
- Awarded for his contribution to **Telugu language and literature**.
- The award was presented on **29 August 2026 at Vijayawada**.
- The occasion was connected with the birth anniversary of **Gidugu Venkata Ramamurthy**, a major figure in Telugu language reform.
- The award included:
 - **₹25,000 cash prize**
 - Memento

GOVERNOR'S GOLD MEDAL

- **T. Rahul Kumar Reddy, IAS**, Additional Commissioner, APCRDA, was honoured with the **Governor's Gold Medal** for his service to the Indian Red Cross Society.
- The recognition was related to his earlier tenure as **Joint Collector of West Godavari**.
- His contribution included:
 - Expansion of Red Cross services
 - Resource mobilisation
 - Junior Red Cross membership
 - Youth Red Cross activities.
- The medal was presented by Governor **S. Abdul Nazeer** at the IRCS Annual General Meeting in Vijayawada on **1 September 2026**.

SKOCH AWARD — ANDHRA PRADESH

- In September 2026, **Jnanabhumi - Directorate of Social Welfare, Andhra Pradesh** was listed as a **SKOCH Award Winner in the Platinum category**.
- Area: **Social Welfare**.

DR. YSR & DR. KVP FOUNDATION AWARD 2026

- **Why in News?**
- The **Dr. YSR & Dr. KVP Foundation** selected the **M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)** for the **Dr. Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy Award 2026**.
- The award carried a **cash prize of ₹25 lakh**.
- It recognised MSSRF's contributions to:
 - Agriculture
 - Food security
 - Sustainable development
 - Rural livelihoods.
- **Soumya Swaminathan**, Chairperson of MSSRF, received the award on behalf of the Foundation.
- The award was presented on **2 September 2026 in New Delhi**.
- **Important background**
- The Dr. YSR & Dr. KVP Foundation was established to carry forward the ideals and public-service vision associated with former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister **Dr. Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy**.
- The inaugural award in 2025 went to **Subhash Palekar Krushi (SPK)**.

