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SEPTEMBER 2026

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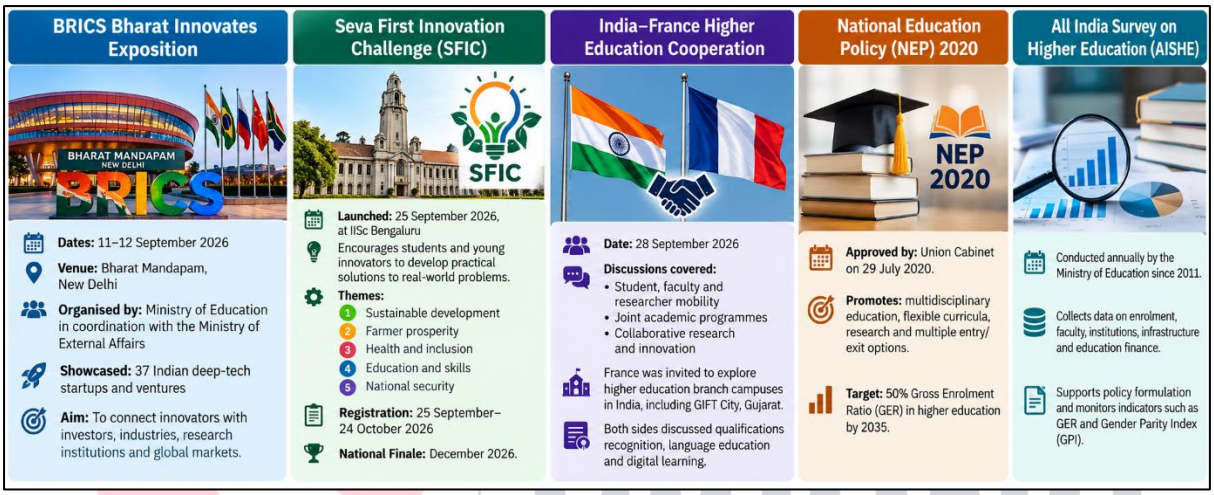


CONSTITUTION, POLITY & GOVERNANCE

1. India's Higher Education Sector: Innovation, Research and Global Collaboration - PIB

Why in news?

Recent initiatives have sought to strengthen India's higher education ecosystem through deep-tech innovation, student-led problem-solving, and international research partnerships.



Significance

- **Innovation-led growth:** Connects university research with startups, industry and commercial applications.
- **Employment generation:** Supports entrepreneurship, technology-based enterprises and skilled job creation.
- **Global competitiveness:** Strengthens India's position in deep-tech research and international knowledge networks.
- **Inclusive development:** Encourages practical solutions to agricultural, health, environmental and educational challenges.

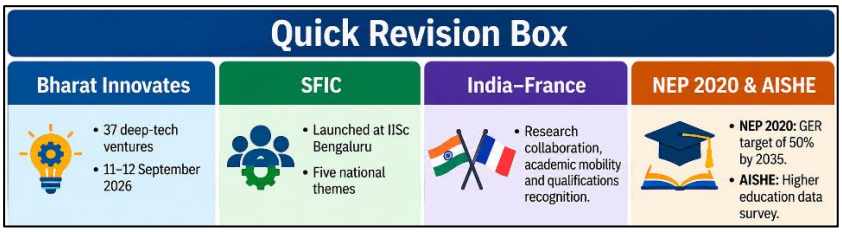
Challenges

- **Research funding:** Uneven access to laboratories, advanced equipment and sustained research finance.
- **Commercialisation gap:** Difficulty converting academic research into scalable products and services.
- **Institutional disparities:** Differences in research capacity between premier institutions and other HEIs.
- **Internationalisation barriers:** Differences in qualifications, academic systems and institutional capacity can constrain collaboration.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen R&D funding:** Expand competitive research grants and industry-supported university research.
- **Build innovation ecosystems:** Strengthen incubators, technology-transfer offices and university–industry partnerships.
- **Promote equitable access:** Extend research infrastructure, mentorship and innovation opportunities to regional institutions.

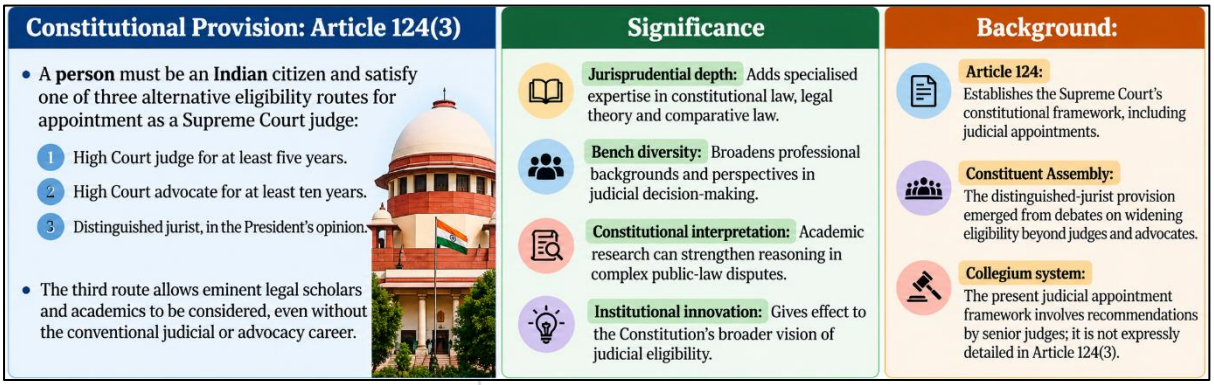
- **Deepen global partnerships:** Facilitate joint degrees, researcher mobility, qualification recognition and collaborative research.



2. Distinguished Jurists in the Supreme Court: An Unused Constitutional Provision – Hindustan Times

Why in News?

On 30 August 2026, Supreme Court judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan called for serious consideration of appointing distinguished jurists to the Supreme Court, highlighting that this constitutional provision has remained unused for over 76 years. The address was delivered at the 13th convocation of National Law University Delhi's LL.M. programmes.

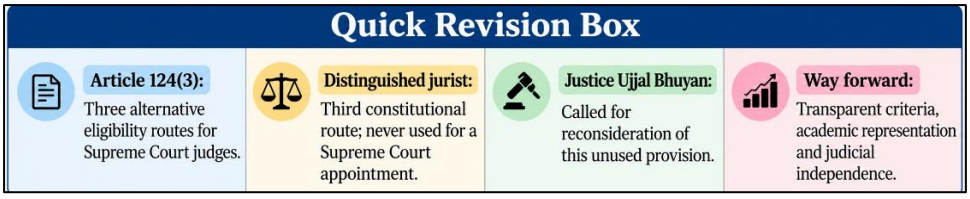


Key Issues

- **Underutilised provision:** No Supreme Court judge has been appointed through the distinguished-jurist route.
- **Unclear selection criteria:** The Constitution does not define the precise standards for identifying a distinguished jurist.
- **Academic representation:** Legal scholarship may not receive sufficient representation in judicial appointments.
- **Selection process:** The interaction between the collegium system and this constitutional route requires greater clarity.

Way Forward

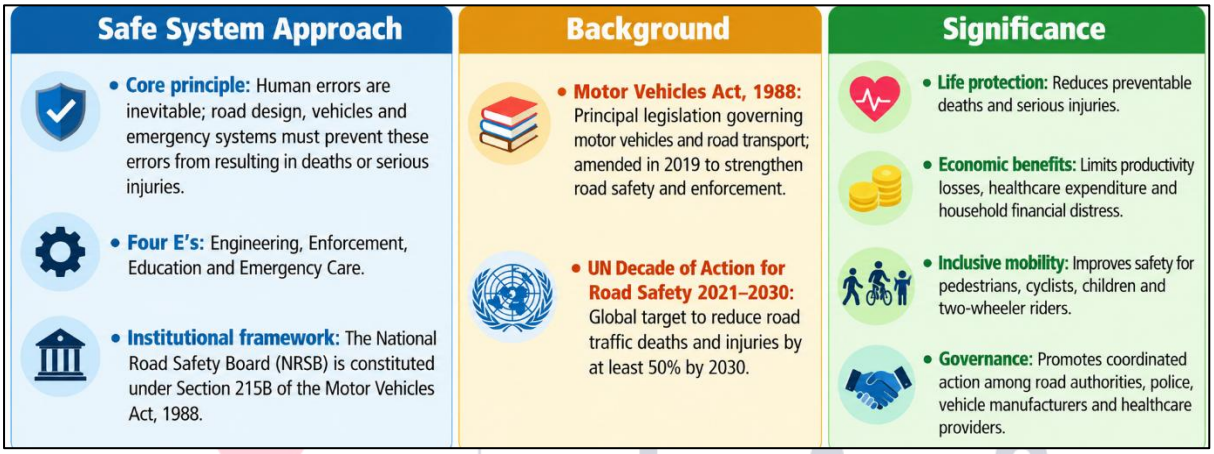
- Develop transparent, merit-based criteria for assessing distinguished jurists.
- Encourage consultation between the judiciary, government and leading legal institutions.
- Assess candidates on scholarship, constitutional understanding, integrity and independence.
- Preserve judicial independence and ensure appointments remain free from political considerations.



3. Road Safety in India: From Traffic Enforcement to a Safe System Approach – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways highlighted responsible road behaviour, engineering interventions and timely emergency care during the Youth Safety & Smart Mobility Expedition 2026. This reflects the need to address road safety through a comprehensive, system-wide approach.

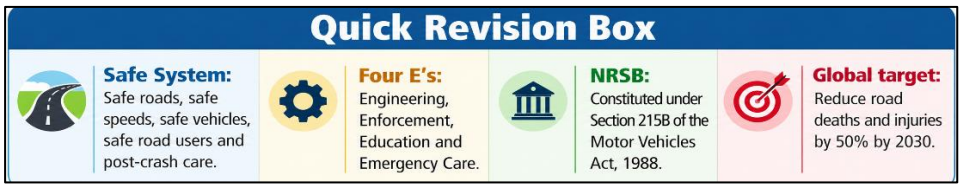


Challenges

- **Weak enforcement:** Traffic violations and inadequate monitoring undermine compliance.
- **Unsafe infrastructure:** Poorly designed junctions, hazardous road stretches and inadequate pedestrian facilities increase risks.
- **Behavioural risks:** Overspeeding, distracted driving and non-use of helmets or seat belts remain concerns.
- **Post-crash delays:** Slow emergency response can worsen injuries during the critical golden hour.

Way Forward

- **Engineering:** Identify and rectify accident-prone black spots; improve lighting, signage and pedestrian crossings.
- **Enforcement**: Expand technology-enabled monitoring and evidence-based traffic policing.
- **Education:** Strengthen driver training, school-level awareness and community participation.
- **Emergency care:** Improve ambulance networks, trauma facilities and timely treatment; implement the PM-RAHAT framework effectively.



4. Supreme Court's Article 142 Powers: Quashing FIRs Against Protesters – India Today

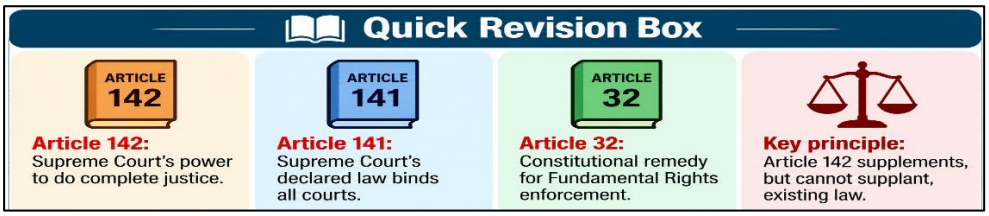
Why in News?

- The Supreme Court invoked Article 142 to quash FIRs against protesters involved in demonstrations over the NEET-UG 2026 paper-leak issue, describing its intervention as necessary to protect the future of young protesters.
- Chief Justice of India Surya Kant welcomed the protesters' decision to withdraw their proposed march, while the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) described the ruling as "historic."



Way Forward

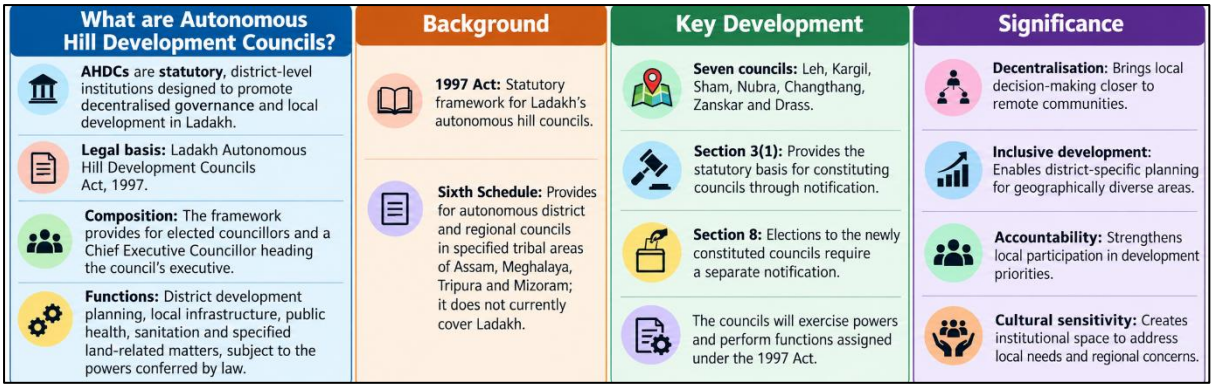
- Apply Article 142 only through reasoned, exceptional and constitutionally consistent orders.
- Protect peaceful protest while ensuring accountability for independently established criminal conduct.
- Safeguard victims' rights and procedural fairness.
- Maintain clear limits: Article 142 supplements the law but cannot override statutory provisions or Fundamental Rights.



5. Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils: Strengthening Grassroots Democracy – Indian Express

Why in News?

The Ladakh Administration notified Autonomous Hill Development Councils (AHDCs) for all seven districts through a Gazette notification dated 3 September 2026, extending the existing council framework beyond Leh and Kargil.

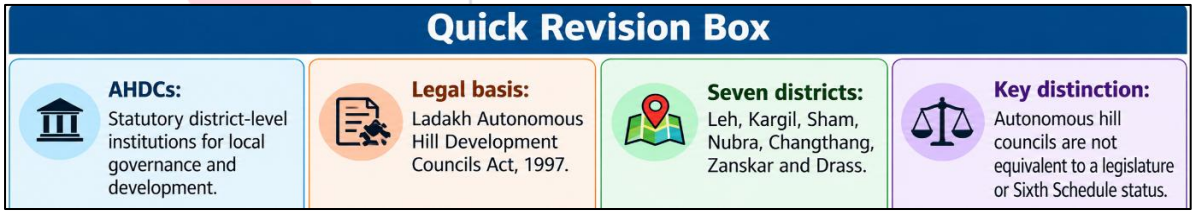


Challenges

- **Limited autonomy:** Councils do not amount to a full-fledged legislature for Ladakh.
- **Resource constraints:** Effective delivery depends on adequate funds and staff.
- **Coordination:** Overlapping responsibilities may create administrative delays.
- **Constitutional safeguards:** Demands concerning land, culture and environmental protection remain significant.

Way Forward

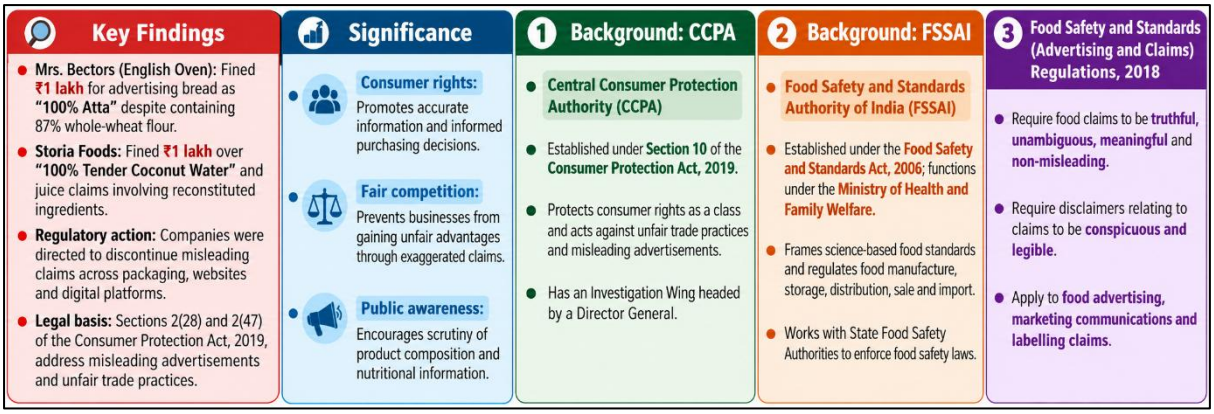
- Conduct transparent, timely council elections.
- Devolve clear responsibilities alongside adequate financial and administrative resources.
- Strengthen accountability through public consultations and social audits.
- Continue dialogue on constitutional safeguards suited to Ladakh's distinct needs.



6. Misleading '100%' Food Claims: CCPA Strengthens Consumer Protection – The Hindu

Why in News?

The Hindu recently examined the Central Consumer Protection Authority's action against misleading "100%" claims on food products. The CCPA announced penalties against two companies in June 2026.

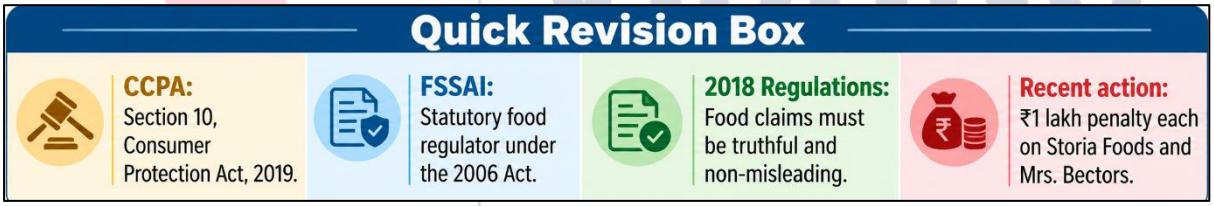


Challenges

- Consumers may overlook ingredient lists and rely on prominent packaging claims.
- Fine-print disclosures can obscure actual product composition.
- Online advertising increases the reach of misleading claims.

Way Forward

- Enforce evidence-based standards for composition and nutrition claims.
- Require clear disclosures about reconstituted ingredients.
- Strengthen monitoring of e-commerce and digital advertisements.
- Improve consumer awareness and impose proportionate penalties.



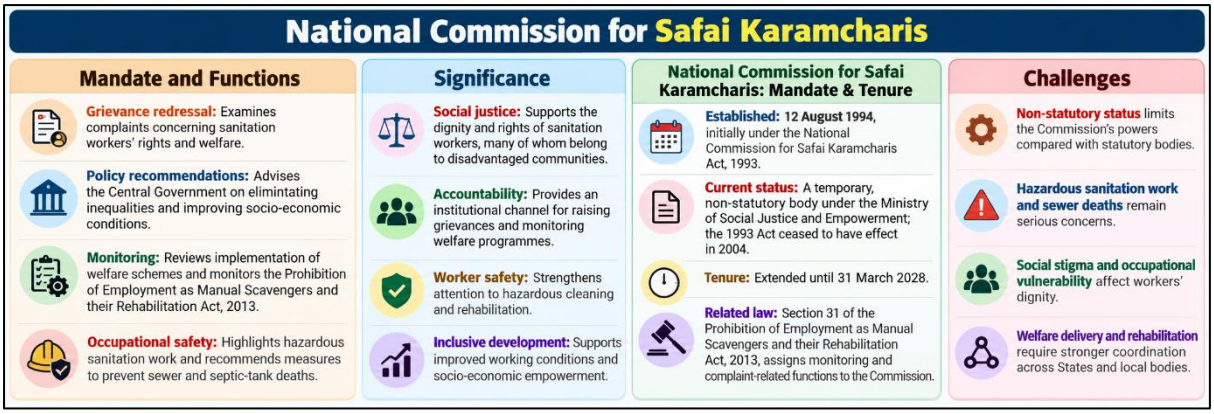
7. National Commission for Safai Karamcharis: Strengthening the Rights and Dignity of Sanitation Workers – PIB

Why in News?

- The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment appointed a new Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three Members to the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) on 6 September 2026.
- The appointments are effective until 31 March 2028, corresponding to the remaining tenure of the Commission.

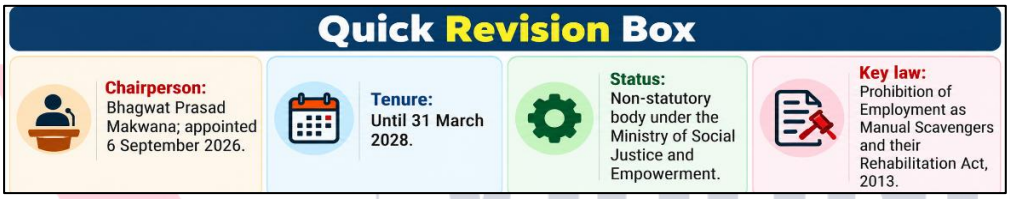
Key Appointments

- **Chairperson:** Bhagwat Prasad Makwana.
- Vice-Chairperson: Kaishab Bihari.
- **Members:** Manoj Kumar Balmiki, Sushma Gaudiyal and Ravi Ramu Kalose.



Way Forward

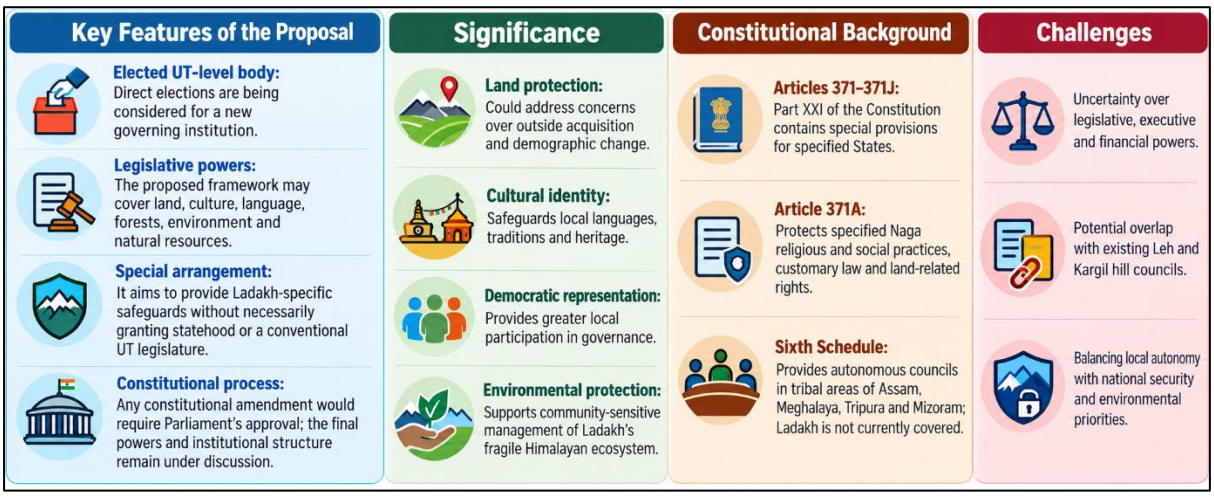
- Strengthen the Commission's institutional capacity and accountability.
- Accelerate mechanisation of sewer and septic-tank cleaning.
- Enforce worker safety, protective equipment and rehabilitation measures.
- Improve grievance tracking and coordination with State authorities.



8. Proposed Article 371(K): Constitutional Safeguards for Ladakh – Indian Express

Why in News?

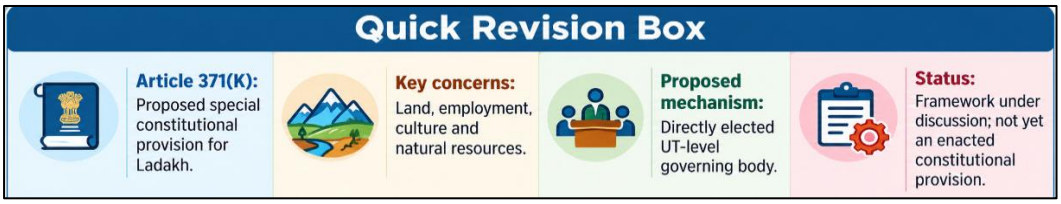
- The Ladakh Administration recently confirmed that a new constitutional framework is being developed to protect Ladakh's land, employment, culture, environment and natural resources.
- The proposal reported as Article 371(K) emerged from discussions between the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ladakh representatives; it is not yet an existing constitutional provision.



Way Forward

- Publish a clear draft and consult local stakeholders.

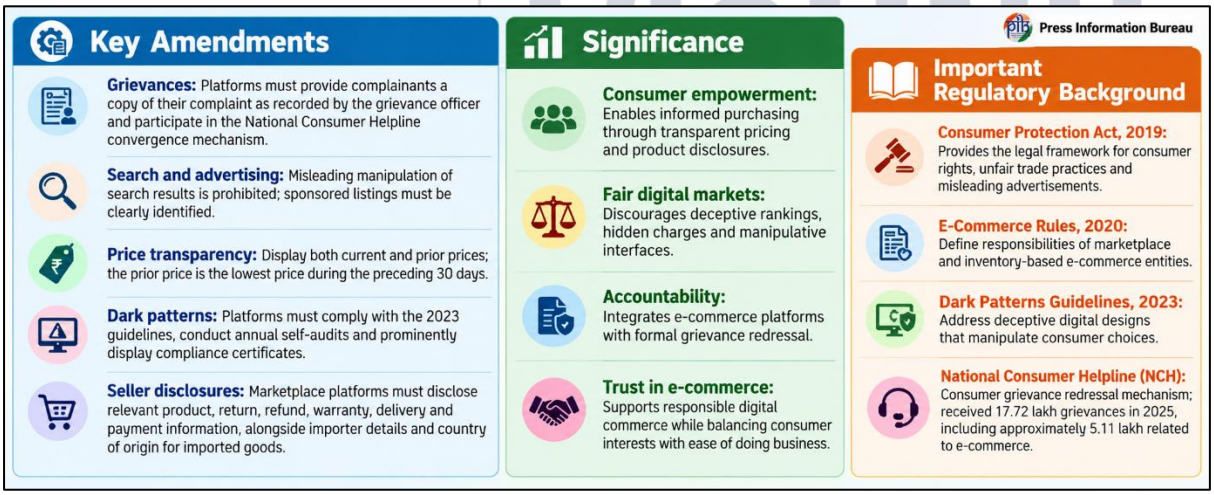
- Define powers, funding and accountability mechanisms.
- Ensure coordination with existing hill councils.
- Provide enforceable safeguards through the appropriate constitutional and legislative process.



9. E-Commerce Rules, 2026: Strengthening Consumer Protection and Digital Transparency - PIB

Why in News?

- The Department of Consumer Affairs amended the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020 through the 2026 Amendment Rules, notified on 10 September 2026.
- The amendments aim to improve grievance redressal, pricing transparency, fair search results and accountability of online marketplaces. They will come into force on 1 January 2027.

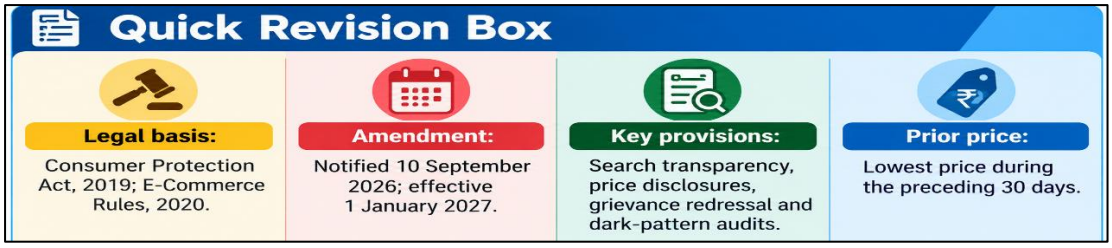


Challenges

- Monitoring compliance across numerous domestic and cross-border platforms.
- Detecting algorithmic manipulation and evolving dark patterns.
- Ensuring that disclosures are understandable and accessible.
- Balancing effective regulation with innovation and ease of doing business.

Way Forward

- Strengthen risk-based audits and enforcement by the CCPA.
- Improve coordination between platforms, NCH and consumer authorities.
- Promote accessible disclosures and consumer awareness.
- Review compliance regularly and address emerging digital-market practices.



10. Removal of the Chief Election Commissioner: Constitutional Safeguards and Accountability – Indian Express

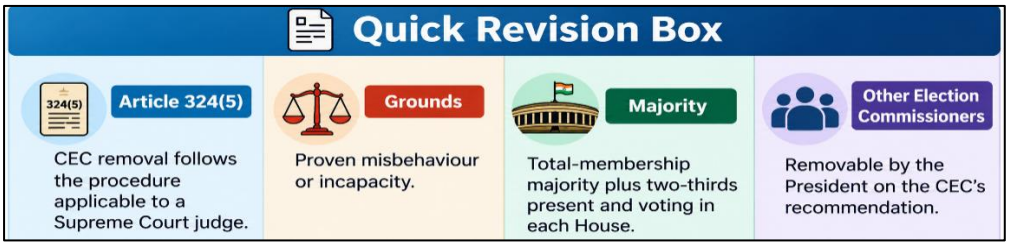
Why in News?

- Opposition parties recently sought the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, raising questions about the constitutional procedure for removing the head of India's Election Commission.
- The central issue is the balance between accountability for alleged misconduct and protecting the Election Commission's independence.



Way Forward

- Ensure transparent, impartial investigation of substantiated allegations.
- Strengthen parliamentary scrutiny while preserving constitutional safeguards.
- Improve transparency in Election Commission decision-making.
- Build cross-party consensus on electoral reforms and institutional independence.

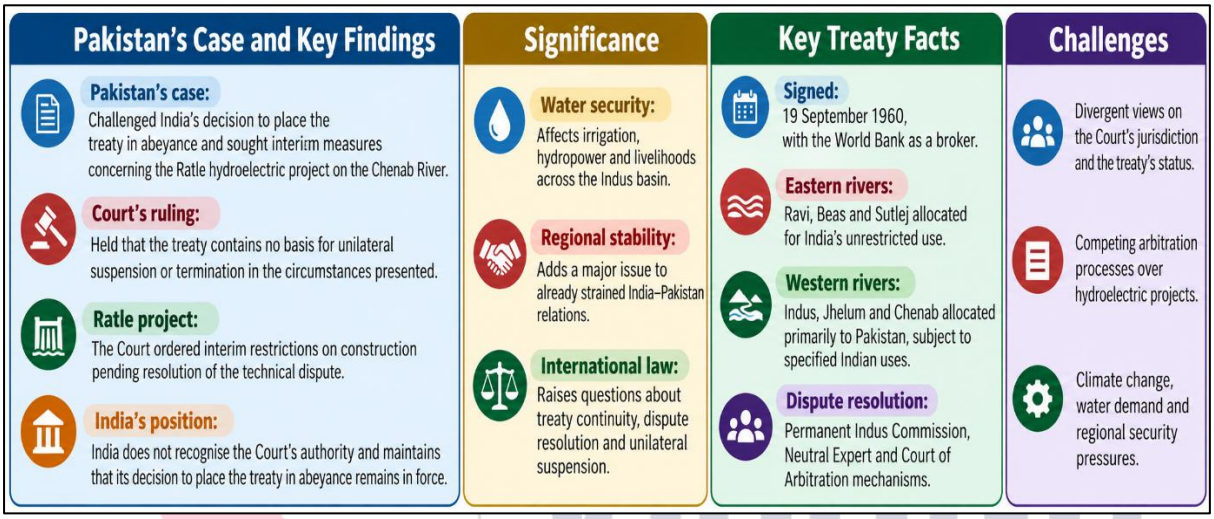


INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

11. Indus Waters Treaty: International Arbitration and India–Pakistan Water Dispute – Indian Express

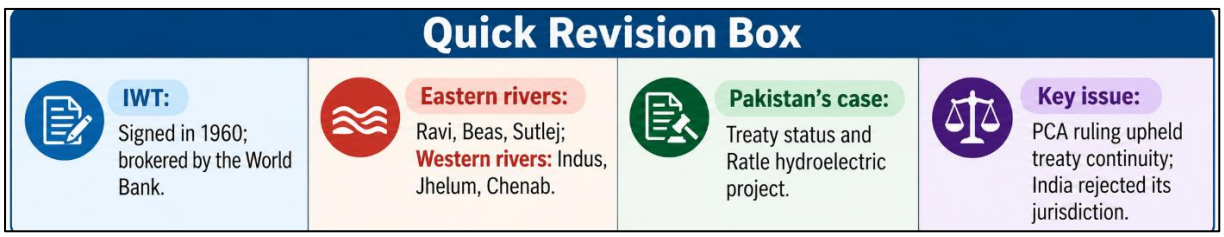
Why in News?

- The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) announced a ruling on 31 August 2026, holding that the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), 1960, remained in force despite India's decision to place it in abeyance.
- India rejected the ruling, arguing that the Court of Arbitration was improperly constituted and lacked jurisdiction over India's sovereign decisions.



Way Forward

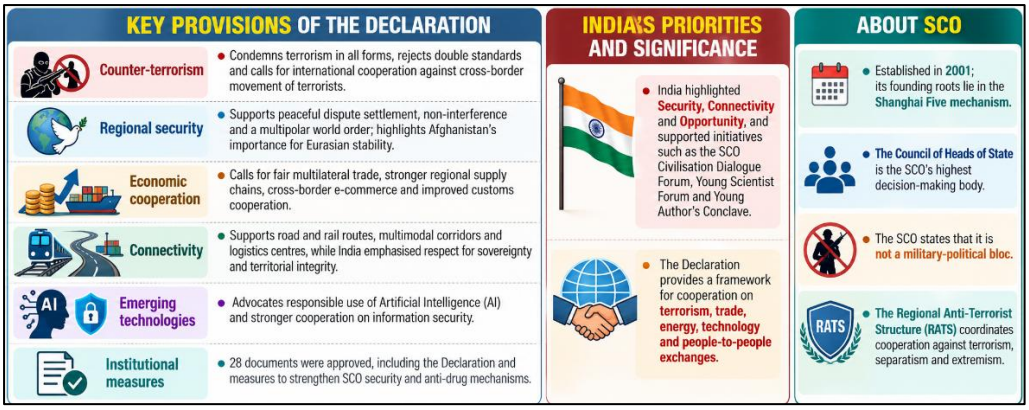
- Pursue diplomatic dialogue and treaty-based technical engagement.
- Clarify legal positions through recognised international-law processes.
- Modernise water management to address climate and development needs.



12. SCO Summit 2026: Bishkek Declaration and Its Key Priorities – Indian Express

Why in News?

The 26th Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, from 31 August to 1 September 2026, marking the organisation's 25th anniversary. Leaders adopted the Bishkek Declaration.



Challenges

- Geopolitical rivalries and differing national interests.
- Security concerns, including terrorism and instability in Afghanistan.
- Connectivity projects may face sovereignty and implementation disputes.

Way Forward

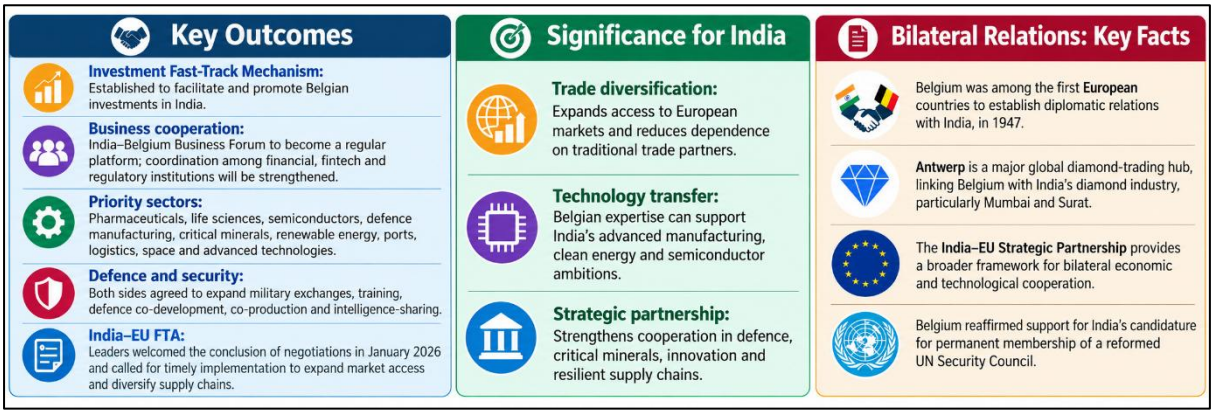
- Convert declarations into measurable, time-bound cooperation.
- Strengthen intelligence-sharing, economic integration and transparent connectivity frameworks.
- Uphold international law while addressing members' security concerns.



13. India–Belgium Relations: Target to Double Bilateral Trade in Five Years

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever agreed to double bilateral trade over the next five years, during talks in New Delhi on 3 September 2026. Bilateral trade was estimated at around US$13 billion.



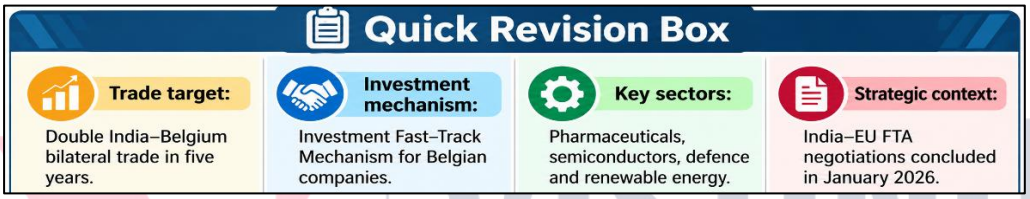
Challenges

- Differences in regulatory standards, market access and business procedures.
- Global trade uncertainty and competition for investment.
- Need to translate announcements into actual trade and investment growth.



Way Forward

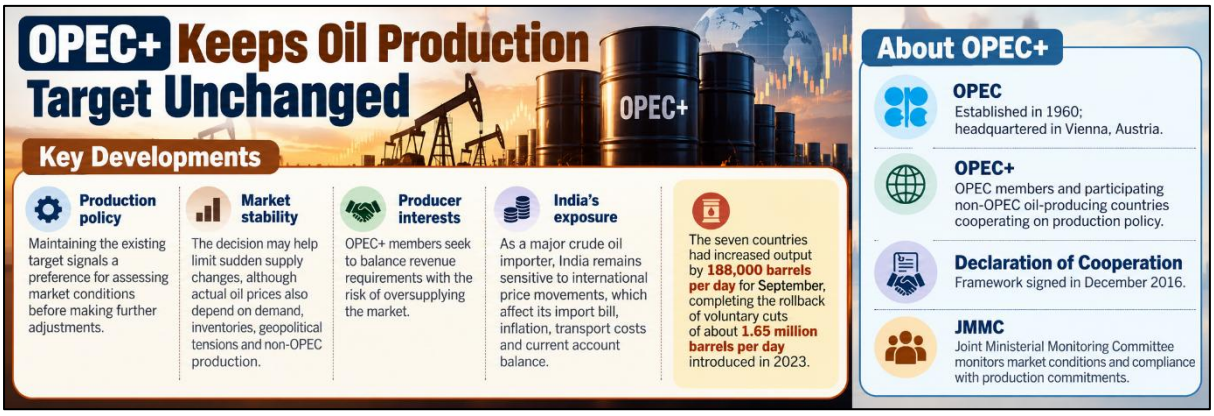
- Implement the India–EU FTA effectively and simplify trade procedures.
- Strengthen MSME partnerships, technology collaboration and investment facilitation.
- Monitor progress through regular business forums and measurable sectoral targets.



14. OPEC+ Keeps Oil Production Target Unchanged: Implications for Global Energy Markets – News on Air

Why in News?

Recently, OPEC+ countries decided to keep their oil production target for October unchanged, maintaining their cautious approach to balancing global oil supply and demand.



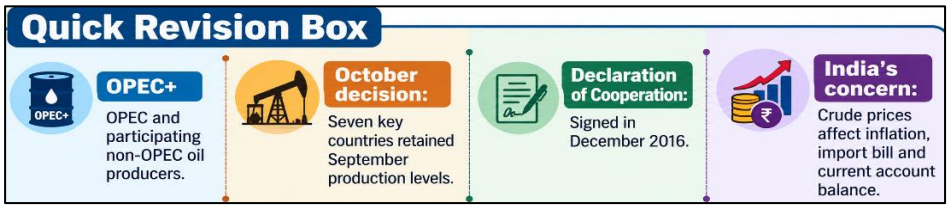
Challenges

- Geopolitical conflicts and disruptions to maritime routes can constrain supply.
- Divergent production interests and compliance difficulties among participating countries.
- Uncertain global demand and non-OPEC output complicate price stabilisation.

Way Forward

- Maintain flexible production decisions based on transparent market assessments.

- Strengthen compliance monitoring and protect critical energy infrastructure.
- For India, diversify import sources, expand strategic petroleum reserves and accelerate renewable energy adoption.



15. India–Japan Defence Cooperation: From Strategic Convergence to Operational Capability – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, India and Japan advanced defence cooperation through agreements on maritime security, naval shipbuilding, defence technology and military exercises, following Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi's visit to India.



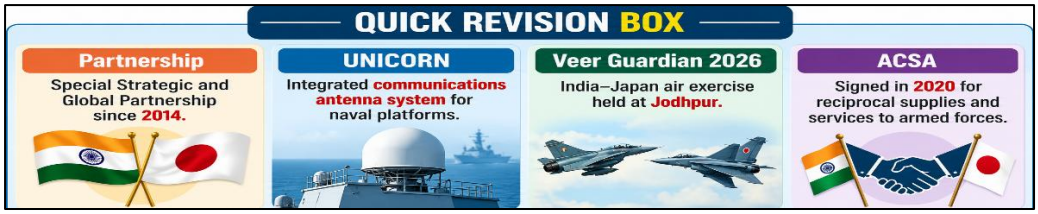
Challenges



- Differences in defence export regulations and technology-transfer procedures.
- Limited conversion of agreements into operational equipment and joint production.
- Need for deeper interoperability across services and sustained joint exercises.

Way Forward

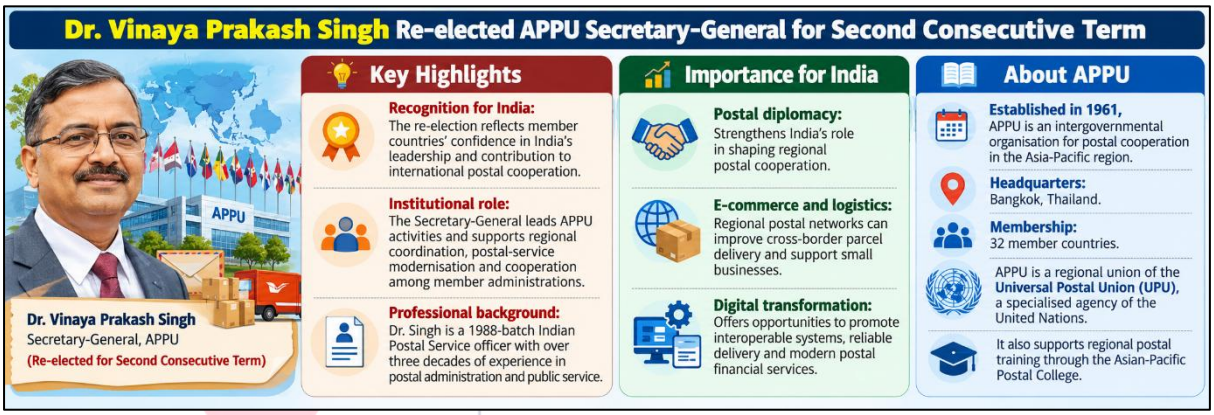
- Set clear timelines for technology transfer and joint manufacturing.
- Expand joint exercises, maritime information-sharing and logistics cooperation.
- Strengthen research partnerships between India's DRDO and Japan's defence technology agencies.



16. Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh Re-elected APPU Secretary-General - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh was re-elected unopposed for a second consecutive four-year term as Secretary-General of the Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) at its 14th Congress in Bangkok. His new term will run from January 2027 to December 2030.

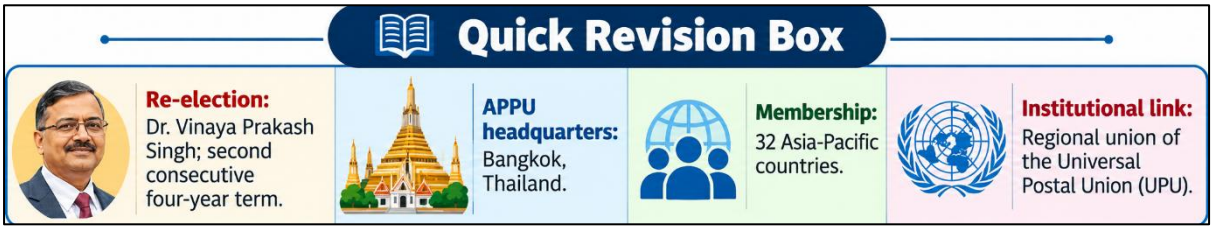


Challenges

- Competition from private courier and logistics companies.
- Uneven digital infrastructure and postal-service capacity across member countries.
- Need to improve cross-border parcel tracking, delivery efficiency and cybersecurity.

Way Forward

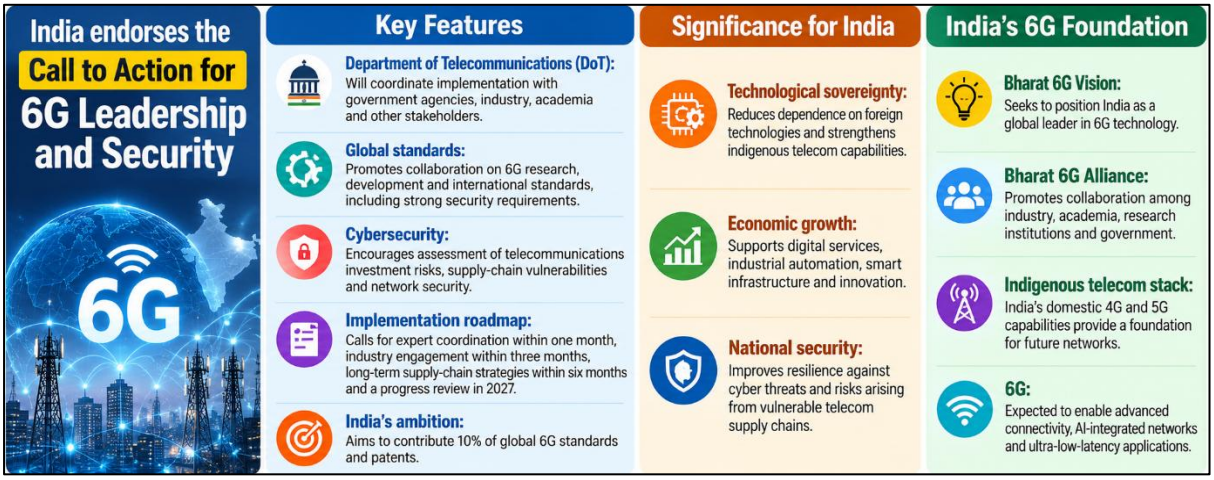
- Expand digital postal platforms and interoperable tracking systems.
- Strengthen training, knowledge-sharing and cross-border e-commerce logistics.
- Promote inclusive, affordable postal services for remote and underserved communities.



17. India Endorses 6G Leadership and Security Initiative - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, India endorsed the Call to Action for 6G Leadership and Security, joining 24 like-minded nations to promote open, interoperable, secure and resilient next-generation telecommunications networks. The announcement was made alongside the G20 Innovation Ministerial in North Carolina, USA.

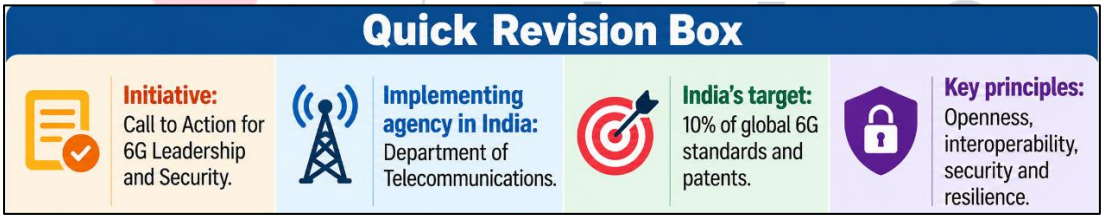


Challenges

- High R&D costs, technology gaps and global competition for patents.
- Cybersecurity threats and dependence on critical components.

Way Forward

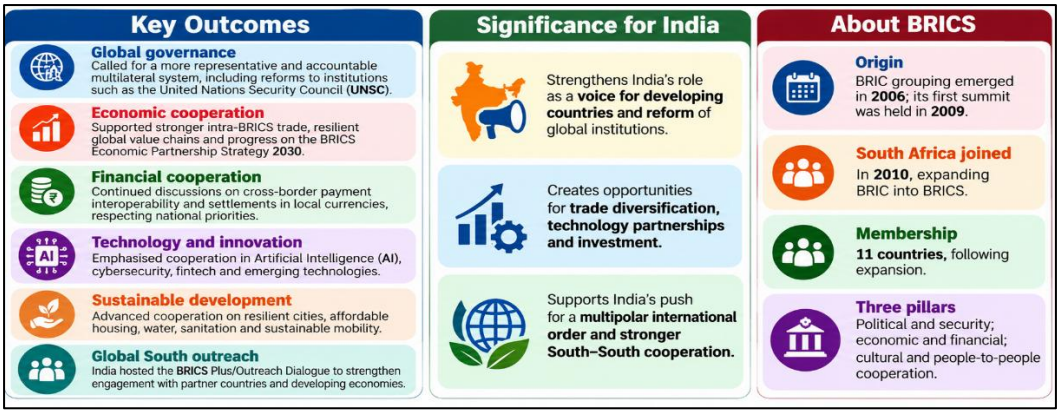
- Increase R&D funding and industry–academia collaboration.
- Develop secure supply chains, skilled manpower and indigenous intellectual property.



18. 18th BRICS Summit: New Delhi Declaration and Global South Cooperation - PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, India hosted the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi on 12–13 September 2026, under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- Leaders adopted the New Delhi BRICS Leaders' Declaration, outlining priorities for cooperation and reform of global governance.



Challenges

- Divergent geopolitical interests and competing national priorities.
- Uneven economic capabilities and trade imbalances among members.
- Limited consensus on financial integration and implementation of common initiatives.

Way Forward

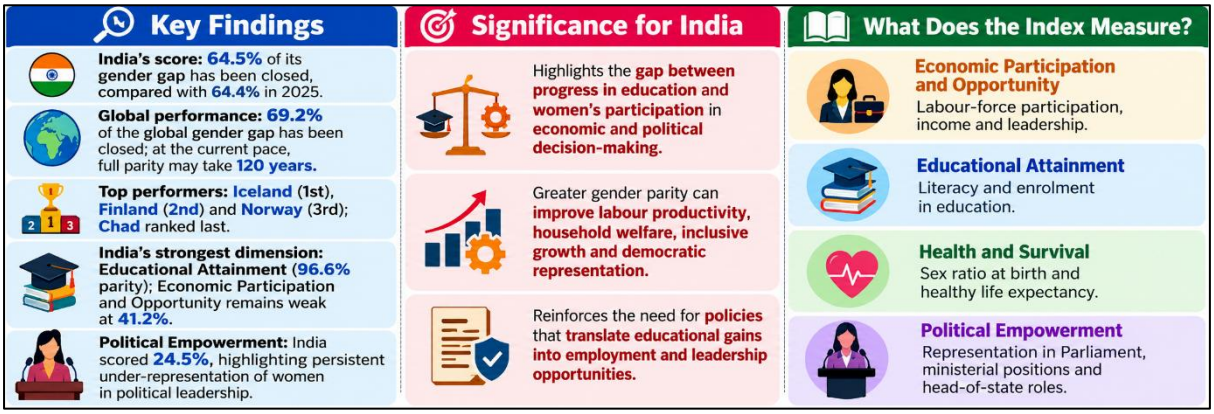
- Translate summit commitments into measurable, time-bound outcomes.
- Strengthen institutional coordination while respecting national sovereignty.
- Expand practical cooperation in trade, development finance, technology and climate resilience.



19. Global Gender Gap Index 2026: India Remains at 131st Rank – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its Global Gender Gap Report 2026, retaining India at 131st among 145 economies, despite a slight improvement in its gender-parity score. Iceland retained the top position.

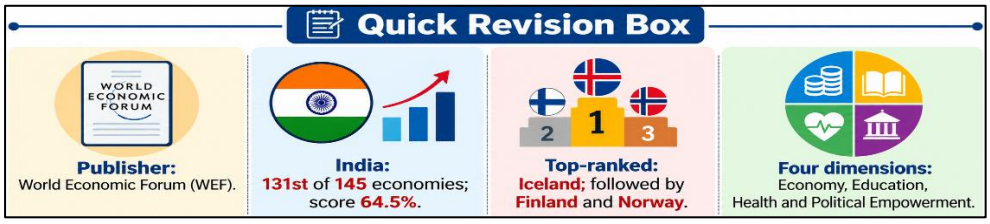


Challenges

- Low female labour-force participation and persistent wage gaps.
- Under-representation in senior management and political leadership.
- Unpaid care work, safety concerns and social barriers.

Way Forward

- Expand childcare, safe transport, skilling and formal employment opportunities.
- Strengthen equal-pay enforcement and women's access to finance.
- Improve women's representation in leadership and decision-making.



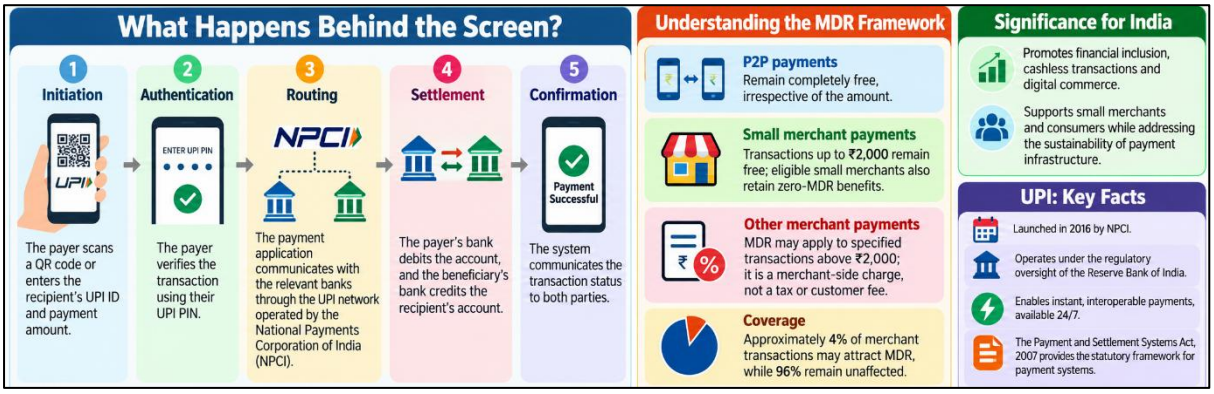
VISHNU IAS

ECONOMY

20. Unified Payments Interface (UPI): How Digital Payments Work and Who Pays the Cost? - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Finance clarified that UPI remains free for all person-to-person (P2P) transactions and approximately 96% of person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions under the revised Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) framework.



Challenges

- Cyber fraud, phishing and social-engineering attacks.
- Transaction failures and dependence on reliable digital infrastructure.
- Ensuring sustainable funding for payment-system operators.

Way Forward

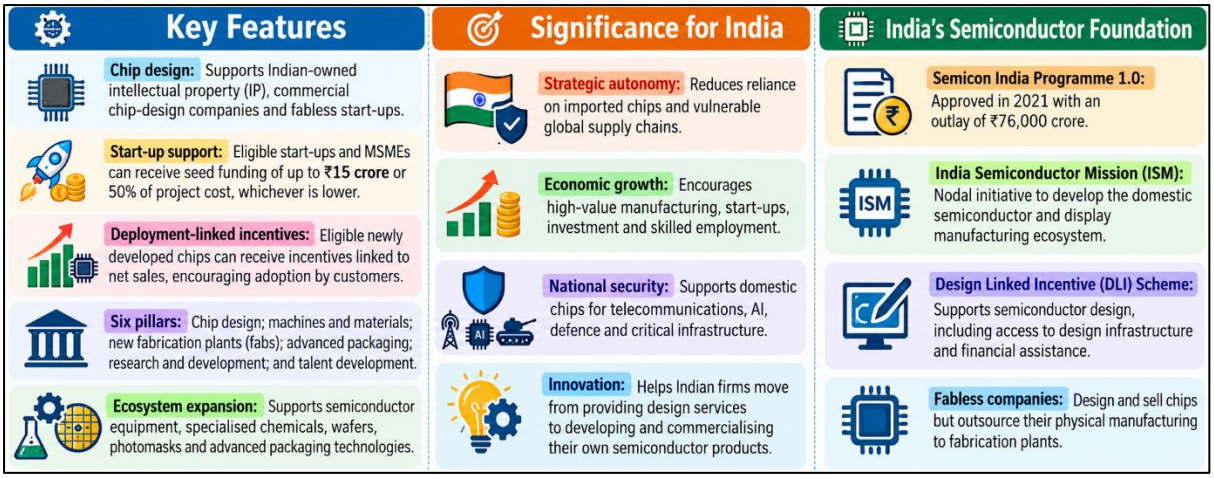
- Strengthen fraud detection, cybersecurity and user awareness.
- Improve transaction reliability and grievance redressal.
- Maintain affordable payments while ensuring ecosystem sustainability.



21. Semicon 2.0: India's ₹1.27 Lakh-Crore Push for Chip Design and Semiconductor Self-Reliance – Indian Express

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Government notified the operational framework for Semicon 2.0, approved with an outlay of ₹1,27,500 crore, to strengthen India's semiconductor design and manufacturing ecosystem.

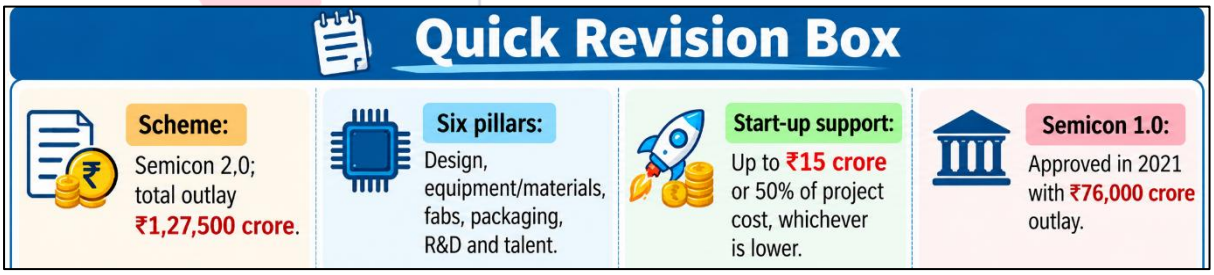


Challenges

- High capital costs, complex technology and long project-development timelines.
- Dependence on imported semiconductor equipment, materials and specialised components.
- Need to convert chip designs into commercially successful products and scale domestic demand.

Way Forward

- Strengthen industry–academia research and semiconductor skills.
- Develop domestic equipment and materials suppliers alongside international partnerships.
- Link public incentives to measurable outcomes in innovation, commercialisation and supply-chain resilience.



22. India's Q1 FY 2026–27 GDP Estimates: Strong Growth Amid Methodological Revisions - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released India's GDP estimates for Q1 (April–June) of FY 2026–27, reporting 7.8% real GDP growth. The estimates use the revised national accounts series with 2022–23 as the base year.

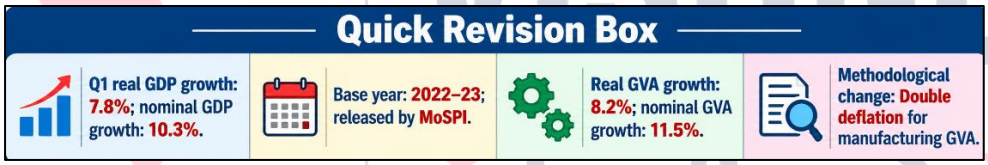


Challenges

- Global uncertainty, trade disruptions and geopolitical tensions.
- Uneven sectoral growth and the need to generate sufficient productive employment.
- GDP estimates remain subject to revisions as better data become available.

Way Forward

- Sustain private investment, manufacturing competitiveness and infrastructure development.
- Strengthen employment-intensive sectors, MSMEs and household purchasing power.
- Improve economic data quality, transparency and timely statistical reporting.



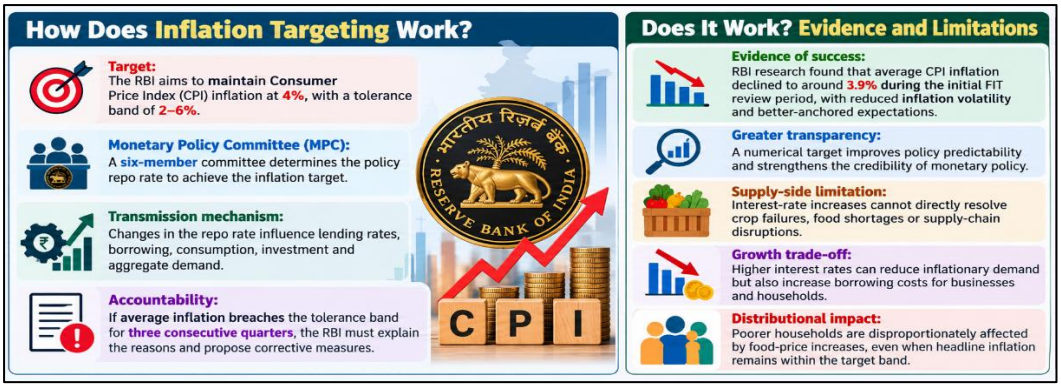
23. Inflation Targeting in India: Effectiveness, Limitations and the Way Forward – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, debate has continued over whether India's Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT) framework effectively controls inflation while supporting economic growth.

Significance for India

- Anchors inflation expectations and protects purchasing power.
- Supports macroeconomic stability and informed investment decisions.
- Requires coordination between monetary policy and government measures to improve food supply.

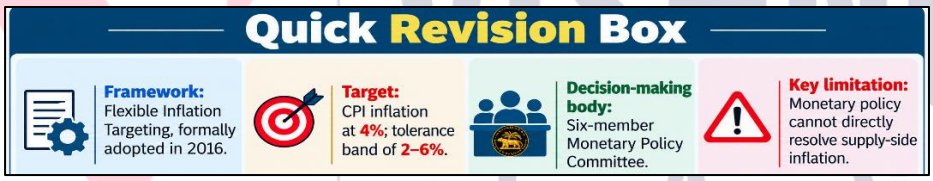


Challenges

- Recurrent food-price shocks and volatile global commodity prices.
- Uneven transmission of repo-rate changes across borrowers.
- Balancing price stability with employment and economic growth.

Way Forward

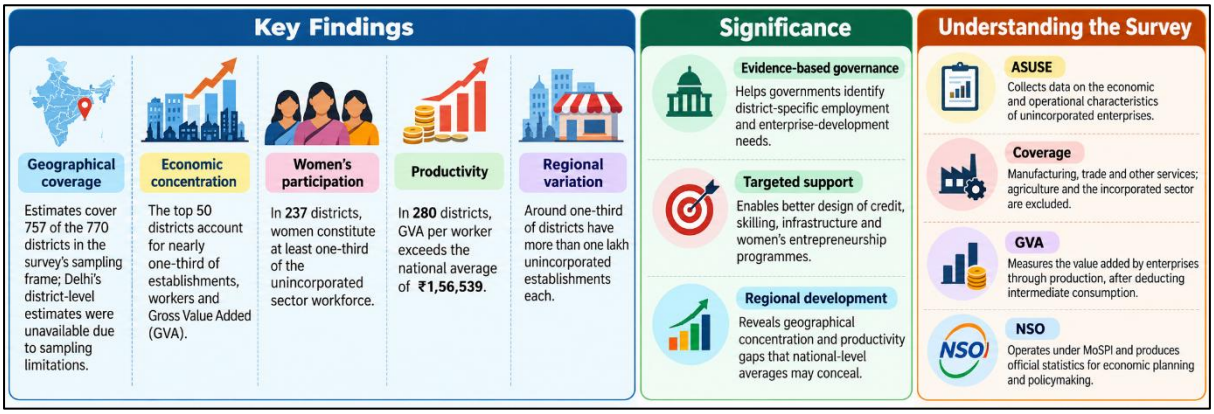
- Strengthen agricultural storage, logistics and food-supply management.
- Improve monetary-policy transmission and inflation forecasting.
- Coordinate RBI action with targeted fiscal and supply-side measures.



24. NSO's First District-Level Estimates of India's Unincorporated Sector - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the National Statistics Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the first-ever district-level estimates of India's unincorporated non-agricultural sector, using data from the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) 2025.



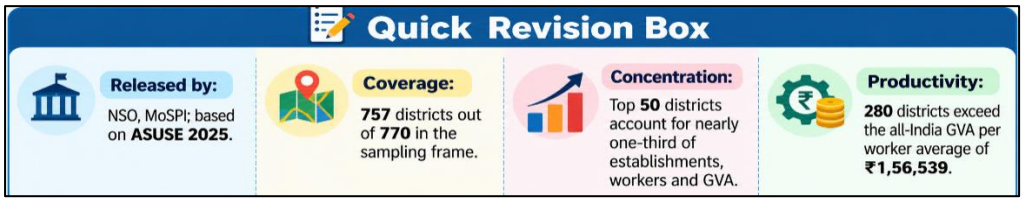
Challenges

- Informal enterprises may face limited access to formal credit, technology and social security.

- District-level averages can conceal differences between rural and urban enterprises.
- Changes in district boundaries can complicate comparisons over time.

Way Forward

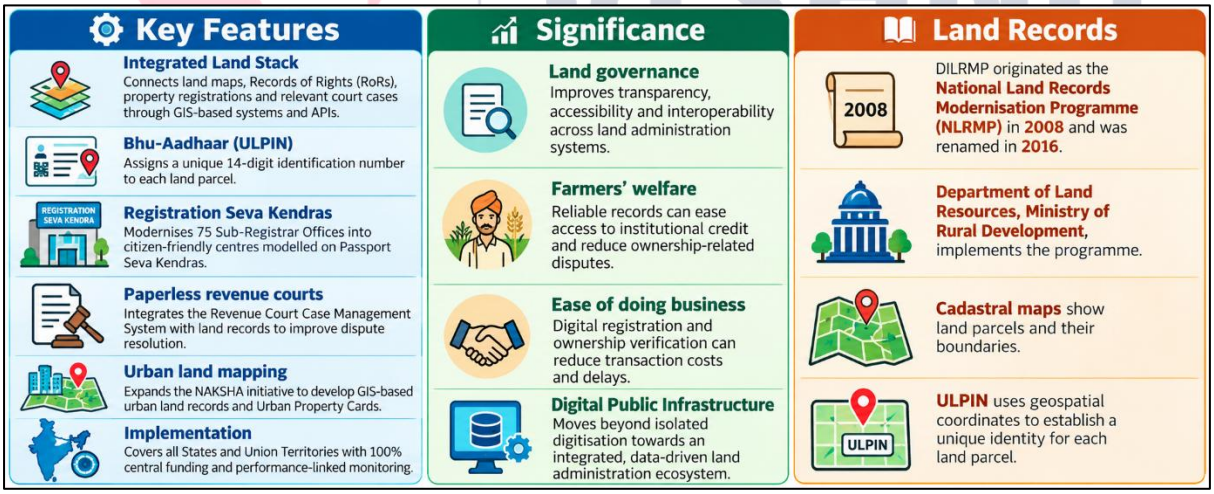
- Use district-level evidence to target MSME credit, skilling and infrastructure support.
- Improve digital registration and access to formal finance for small enterprises.
- Update district estimates regularly to monitor employment, productivity and women's participation.



25. DILRMP 3.0: Digital Transformation of India's Land Records – News on Air

Why in News?

Recently, Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the operational guidelines for the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) 3.0, a Central Sector Scheme for 2026–2031 with an outlay of ₹565.50 crore.

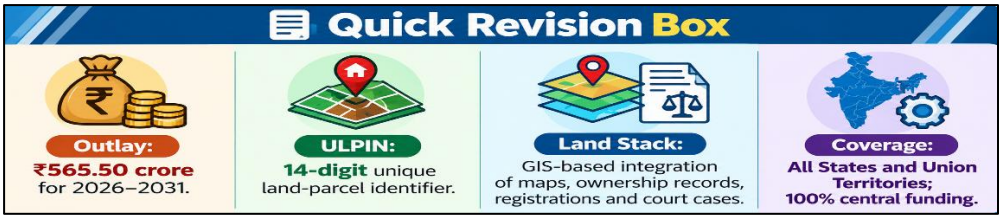


Challenges

- Inconsistent records, outdated maps and fragmented State-level databases.
- Privacy, cybersecurity and data-quality concerns.
- Digitisation alone cannot resolve complex ownership disputes or substitute for legal verification.

Way Forward

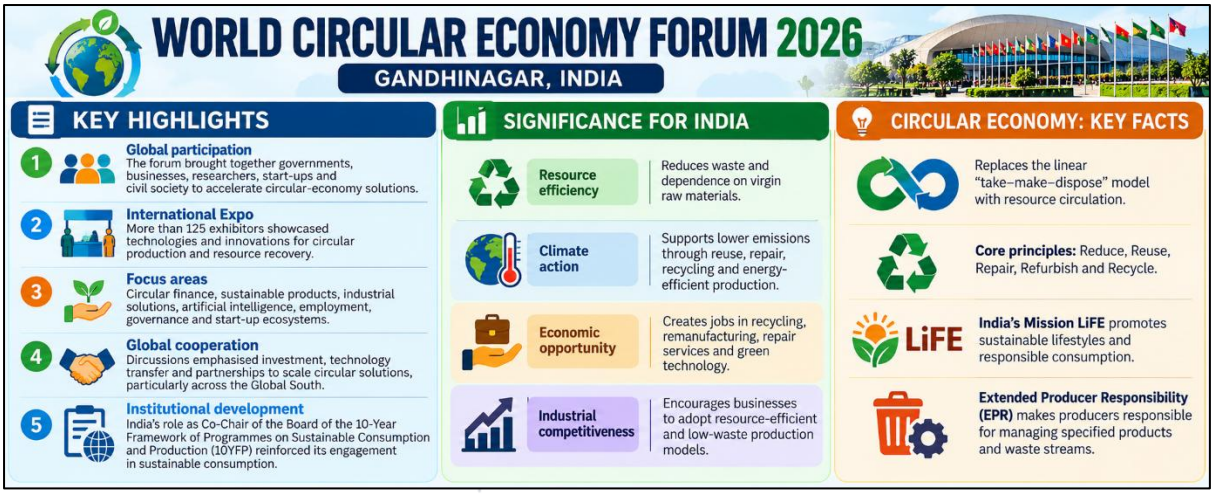
- Ensure accurate ground surveys, georeferencing and regular record updates.
- Strengthen data protection, access controls and interoperability.
- Combine digital records with accessible grievance redressal and legal remedies.



26. World Circular Economy Forum 2026: Advancing Sustainable Production and Consumption – DD News

Why in News?

- Recently, India hosted the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) 2026 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, from 15–18 September, marking the forum's first edition in South Asia.
- Theme: "Circular Economy: Transition for People and Prosperity."



Challenges

- High initial investment and inadequate waste-segregation infrastructure.
- Informal recycling systems and inconsistent material-quality standards.

Way Forward

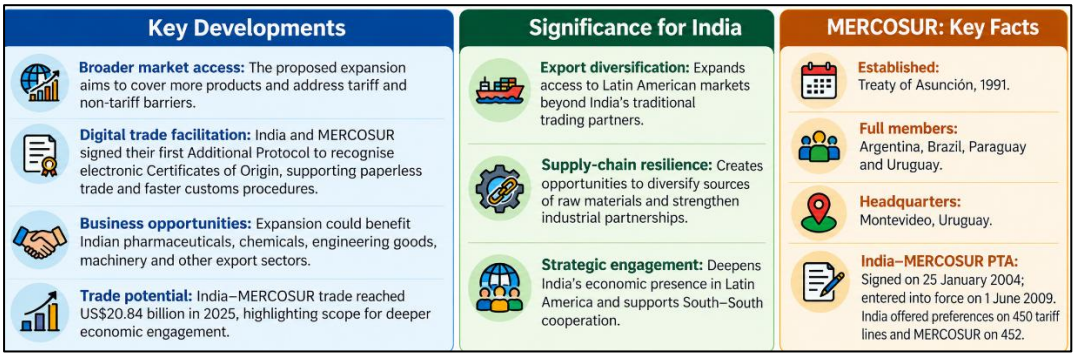
- Expand circular procurement, recycling infrastructure and EPR enforcement.
- Promote eco-design, repairability, resource-efficient technologies and green finance.



27. India–MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement: Expansion of Trade Ties – Hindustan Times

Why in News?

- Recently, India and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) launched negotiations to expand their Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to deepen economic relations and improve market access. The two sides are finalising the Terms of Reference (ToR), which will define the scope of negotiations.



Challenges

- Geographical distance, logistics costs and differing regulatory standards.
- Competition and sensitivities around tariff concessions.

Way Forward

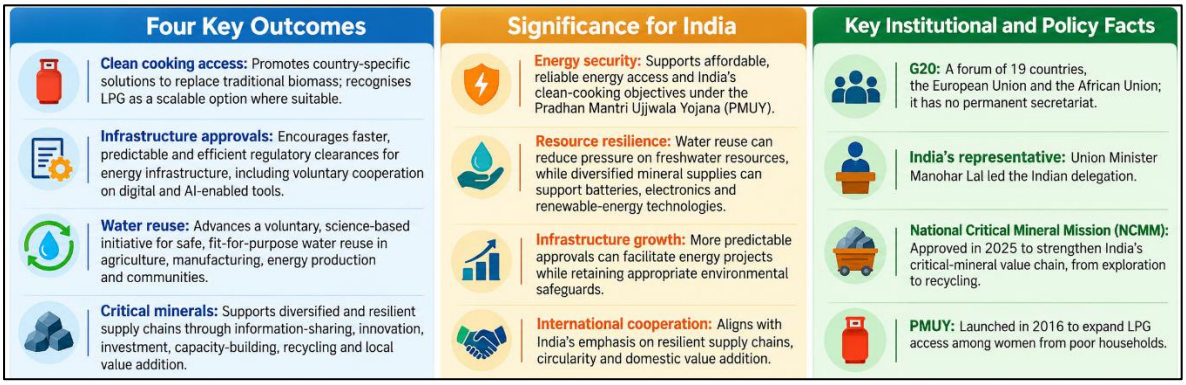
- Finalise the ToR and pursue substantial, mutually beneficial market access.
- Simplify customs procedures and strengthen business-to-business partnerships.



28. India Joins G20 Consensus on Energy Access, Water Reuse and Critical Minerals – News on Air

Why in News?

- Recently, India joined other G20 members in adopting four consensus outcomes at the G20 Energy Abundance Ministerial held in Houston, USA, under the US G20 Presidency.



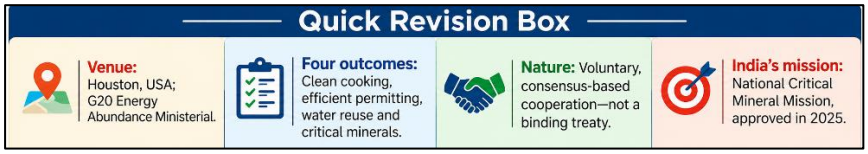
Challenges

- **Clean cooking:** LPG affordability, refill costs and last-mile access remain concerns.

- **Water reuse**: Treatment costs, water-quality monitoring and public acceptance can constrain adoption.
- **Critical minerals:** Import dependence, concentrated global supply and limited domestic processing capacity create vulnerabilities.
- **Regulatory efficiency:** Faster clearances must not weaken environmental assessment or community safeguards.

Way Forward

- Expand clean-cooking access alongside reliable supply and affordable refills.
- Develop wastewater treatment, quality standards and reuse infrastructure.
- Strengthen domestic exploration, mineral recovery, recycling and strategic international partnerships.
- Use transparent, time-bound digital approvals while maintaining environmental and social safeguards.



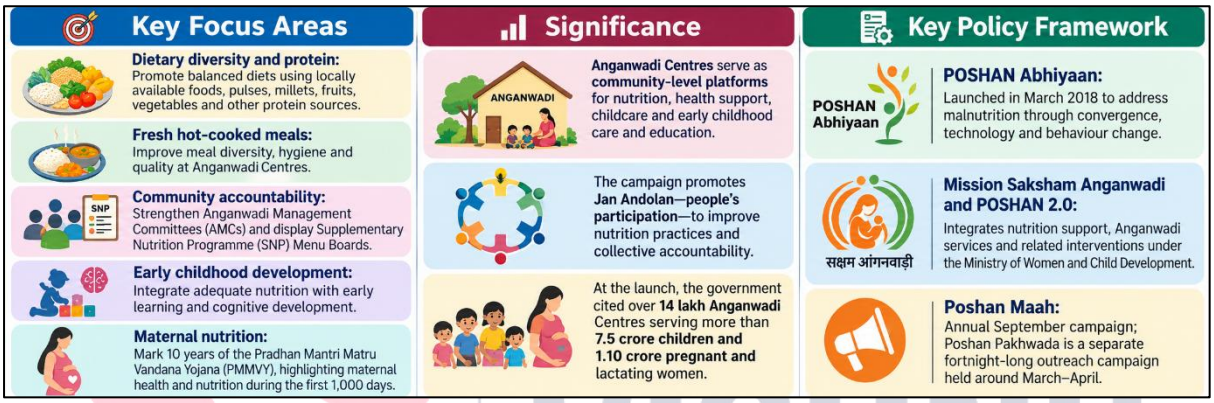
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SOCIAL ISSUES & SOCIAL JUSTICE

29. 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2026: Strengthening Nutrition, Anganwadi Services and Community Participation – PIB

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, under the theme "Hamari Anganwadi, Hamari Jimmedari" (Our Anganwadi, Our Responsibility). The campaign ran from 9 September to 8 October 2026.



Challenges

- Persistent malnutrition, anaemia and dietary deficiencies.
- Uneven quality of supplementary nutrition, infrastructure and service delivery.
- Need for stronger community participation and monitoring.

Way Forward

- Ensure diverse, locally sourced nutritious meals and regular growth monitoring.
- Strengthen Anganwadi infrastructure, frontline-worker capacity and AMC oversight.
- Integrate nutrition, sanitation, maternal care and early learning interventions.

30. Safety, Dignity and Welfare of Sanitation Workers under NAMASTE – PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment reported progress under the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme, highlighting worker profiling, safety equipment and livelihood support.

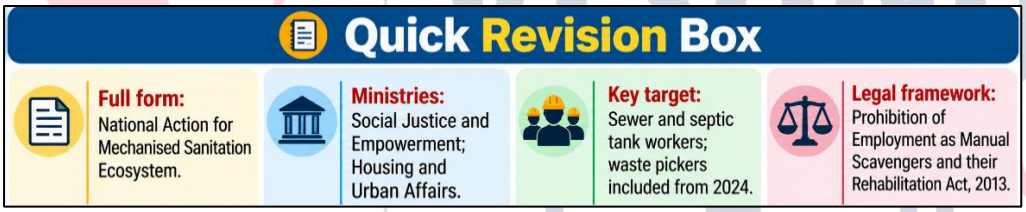


Challenges

- Continued risks from toxic gases, confined spaces and inadequate safety practices.
- Gaps in worker identification, training, equipment maintenance and access to social-security benefits.
- Dependence on manual cleaning and limited access to capital for mechanisation.

Way Forward

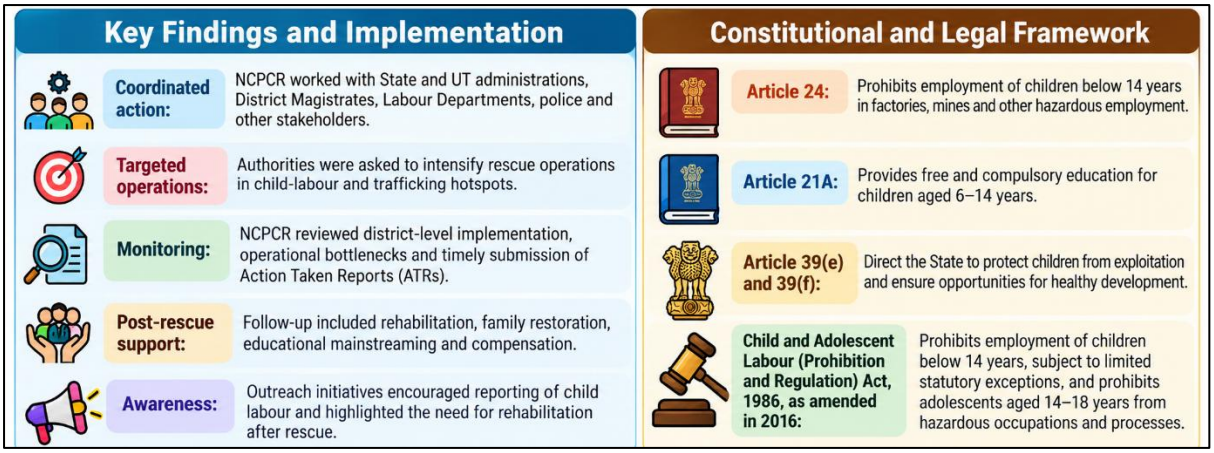
- Ensure mechanised cleaning, mandatory safety protocols and effective use of PPE.
- Expand worker profiling, occupational training, health insurance and livelihood assistance.
- Strengthen municipal accountability and enforce the 2013 Act to prevent hazardous manual cleaning.



31. NCPCR Rescues Over 3,800 Children from Child Labour: Strengthening Rescue and Rehabilitation – PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) reported rescuing over 3,800 children during a special pan-India rescue and rehabilitation campaign conducted from 12 June to 31 August 2026. More than 575 FIRs were registered during the campaign.

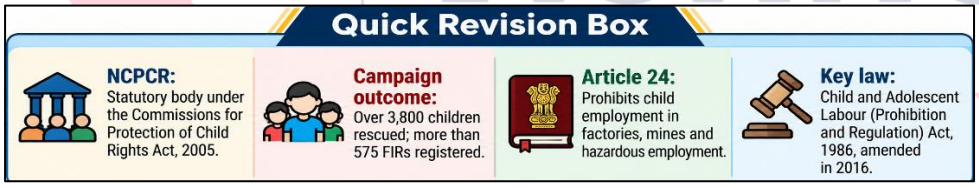


Challenges

- Poverty, family indebtedness and informal employment can push children into work.
- Hidden workplaces and inter-State trafficking complicate identification and rescue.
- Rescued children may face repeat exploitation without sustained rehabilitation and education.

Way Forward

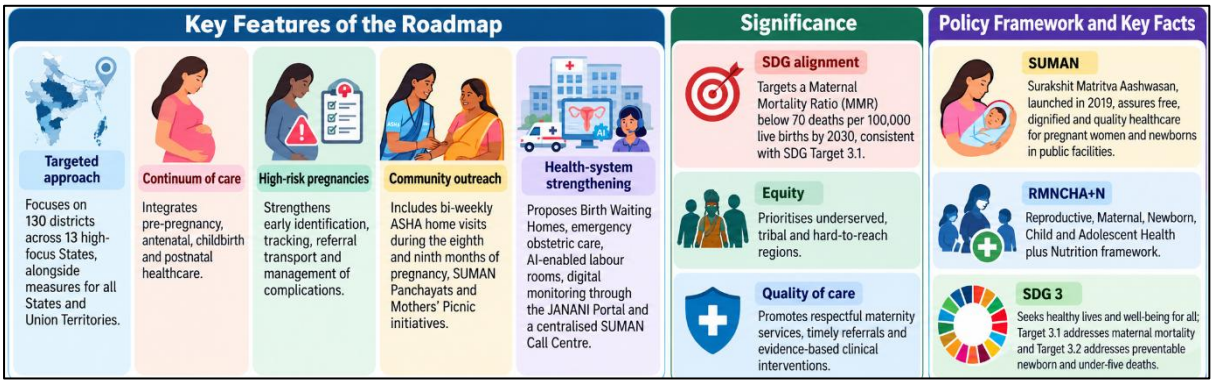
- Strengthen inspections, community reporting and coordination between police, labour authorities and child-protection bodies.
- Ensure compensation, family support, counselling and school reintegration after rescue.
- Track rescued children through follow-up monitoring to prevent re-trafficking and repeat child labour.



32. SUMAN Roadmap 2030: Strengthening Maternal and Newborn Healthcare - PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare convened a national workshop in Lucknow on SUMAN Roadmap 2030, focusing on implementation strategies to eliminate preventable maternal and newborn deaths.

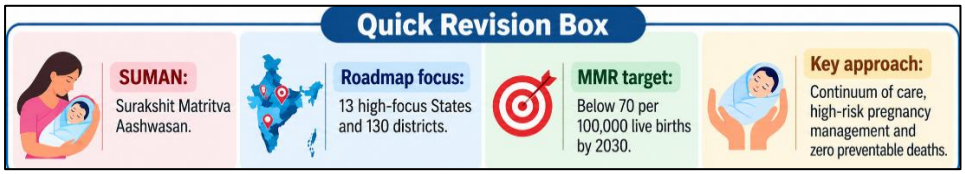


Challenges

- Shortages of skilled personnel, emergency obstetric facilities and referral transport.
- Unequal healthcare access and delays in identifying high-risk pregnancies.
- Need for reliable data, accountability and sustained implementation across States.

Way Forward

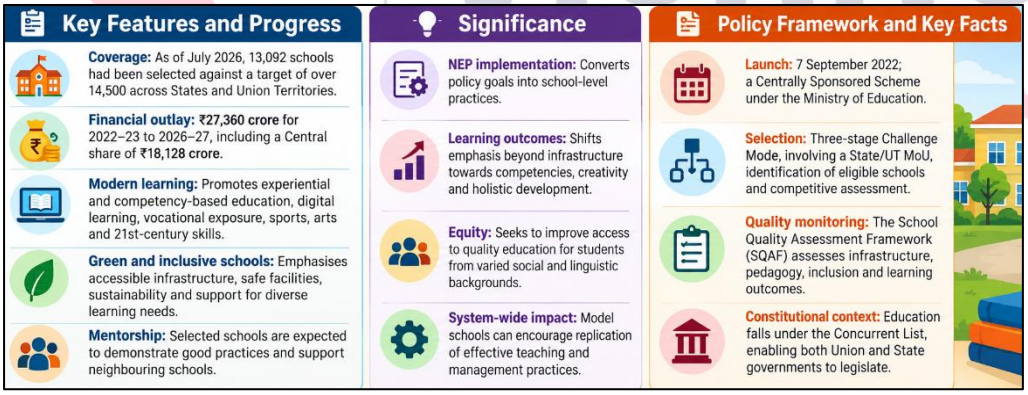
- Strengthen primary healthcare, referral networks and emergency obstetric services.
- Improve ASHA capacity, digital tracking and maternal-death reviews.
- Ensure adequate funding, district-level monitoring and community participation.



33. PM SHRI: India's Push for Future-Ready Schools – PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, the Ministry of Education highlighted the progress of Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI), aimed at transforming existing schools into model institutions aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

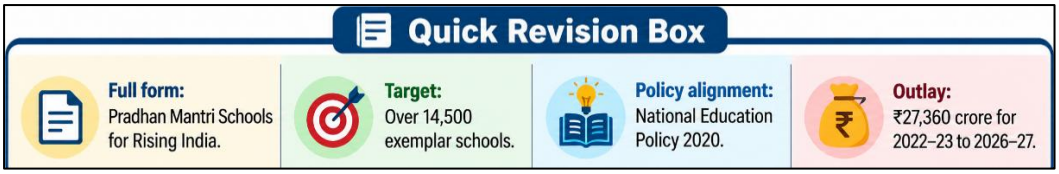


Challenges

- Uneven implementation capacity, teacher shortages and digital divides.
- Sustaining quality standards and funding after the scheme period.
- Ensuring model-school improvements benefit neighbouring institutions.

Way Forward

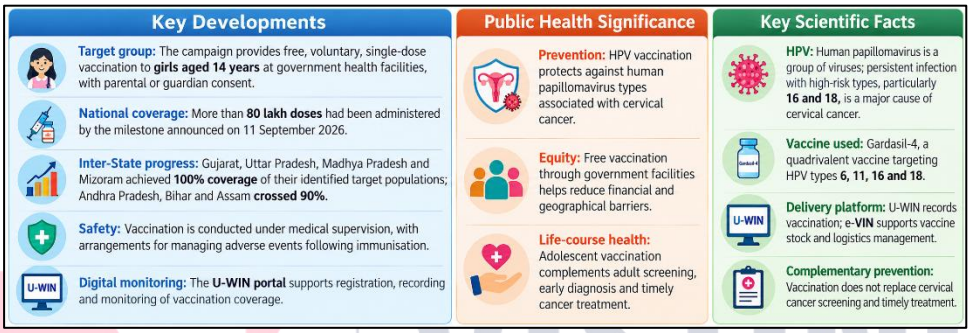
- Strengthen teacher training, school leadership and outcome-based monitoring.
- Prioritise inclusive infrastructure and digital access.
- Scale up successful practices through mentoring and collaboration.



34. India's HPV Vaccination Milestone: Strengthening Cervical Cancer Prevention - PIB

Why in News?

- Recently, India crossed 80 lakh HPV vaccine doses administered under its nationwide campaign, marking progress in cervical cancer prevention among adolescent girls.

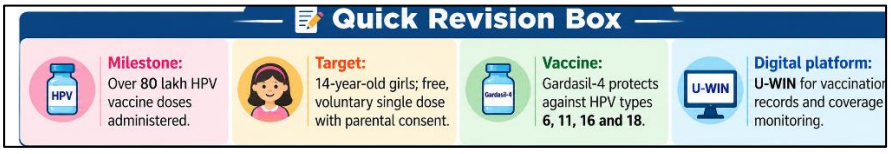


Challenges

- Vaccine hesitancy, misinformation and uneven access in remote areas.
- Reaching all eligible girls and maintaining accurate coverage records.
- Sustaining awareness and routine vaccination after the campaign phase.

Way Forward

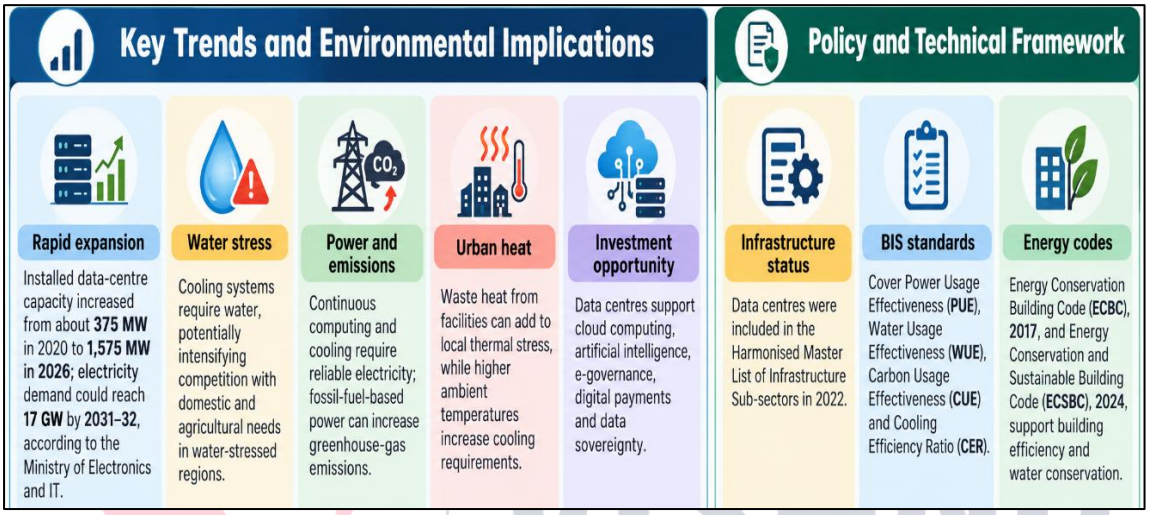
- Strengthen community outreach through ASHAs, ANMs, schools and healthcare professionals.
- Use U-WIN data to identify missed beneficiaries and address coverage gaps.
- Integrate vaccination with screening, early diagnosis and cancer-care services.



35. India's Data Centre Boom: Digital Growth versus Climate Sustainability – The Hindu

Why in News?

- Recently, concerns have intensified over the environmental costs of India's rapidly expanding data-centre infrastructure, particularly electricity demand, water stress, transmission constraints and heat generation.

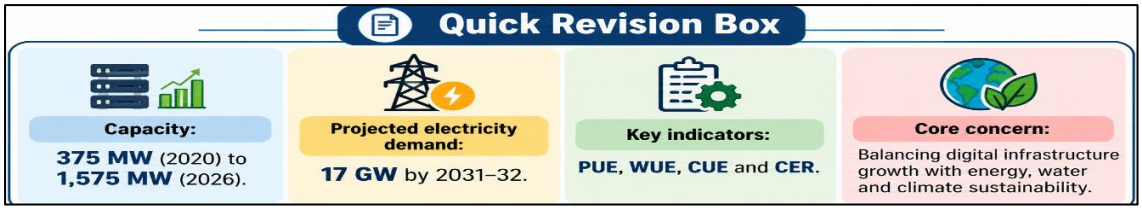


Challenges

- Concentration of facilities in regions facing water and grid constraints.
- Dependence on uninterrupted power and energy-intensive cooling.
- Inadequate transparency and uneven environmental safeguards.

Way Forward

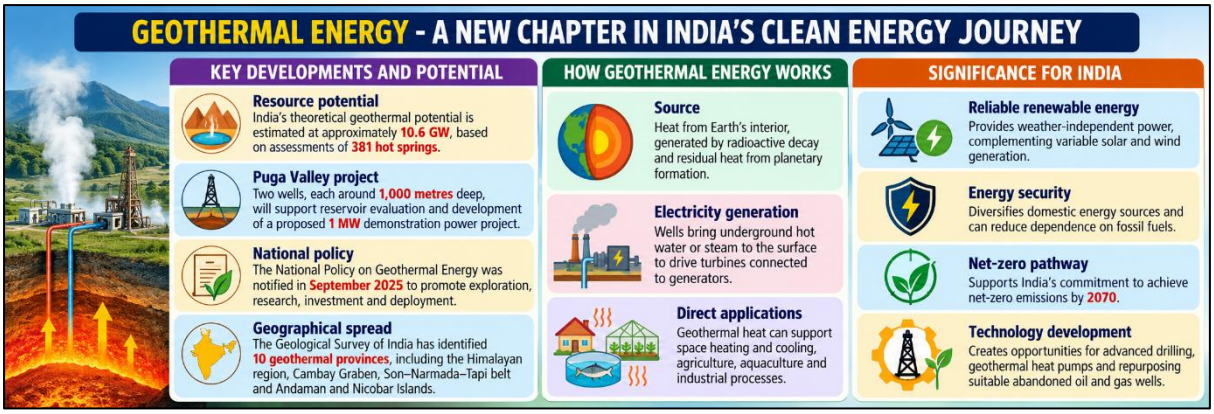
- Prioritise locations based on water availability and grid capacity.
- Promote renewable energy, efficient cooling, treated wastewater and closed-loop systems.
- Link State incentives to measurable sustainability standards and transparent resource-use reporting.



36. Geothermal Energy: A New Chapter in India's Clean Energy Journey – PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy highlighted India's geothermal energy potential following the commissioning of the country's first two geothermal wells at Puga Valley, Ladakh, in July 2026.

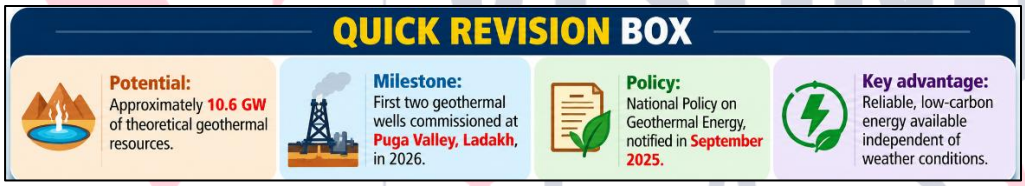


Challenges

- High initial costs of exploration, deep drilling and reservoir assessment.
- Geological uncertainty and limited site-specific data.
- Technical difficulties in managing underground reservoirs and scaling projects commercially.

Way Forward

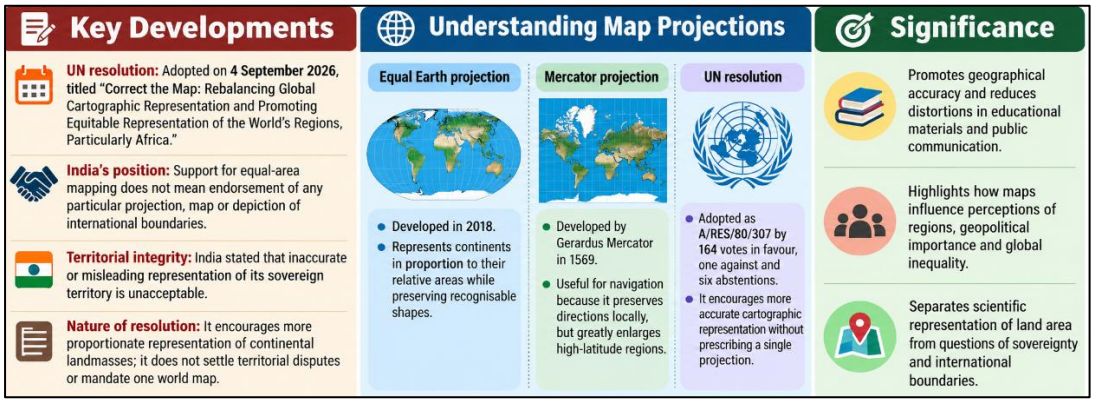
- Expand geological surveys, pilot projects and indigenous research.
- Encourage public–private partnerships and international technology collaboration.
- Develop clear regulations, investment incentives and sustainable reservoir-management practices.



37. India Supports Equal Earth Mapping at the UN While Defending Territorial Integrity – Hindustani times

Why in News?

- Recently, India voted in favour of a UN General Assembly resolution promoting equal-area world maps but clarified that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh must be depicted according to India's official map.



Challenges

- No flat map can represent the spherical Earth without some distortion of area, shape, distance or direction.
- Different projections serve different purposes, making universal adoption unsuitable.
- Political sensitivities arise when maps depict disputed boundaries and territories.

Way Forward

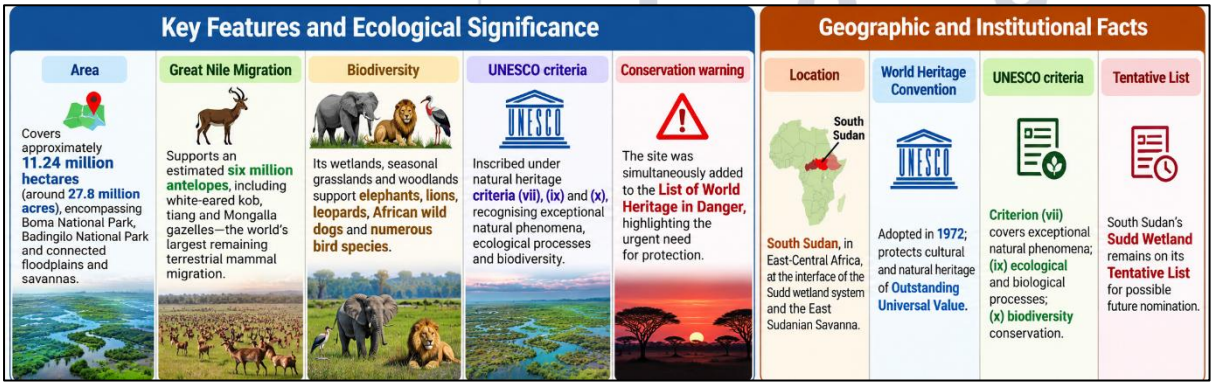
- Select map projections according to purpose, with clear explanations of their limitations.
- Use authoritative national and UN cartographic references.
- Promote geographical literacy while keeping projection choices separate from territorial sovereignty claims.



38. South Sudan's First UNESCO World Heritage Site: Boma–Badingilo Migratory Landscape – Times of India

Why in News?

Recently, the Boma–Badingilo Migratory Landscape became South Sudan's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, following inscription by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session in Busan, Republic of Korea, in July 2026.



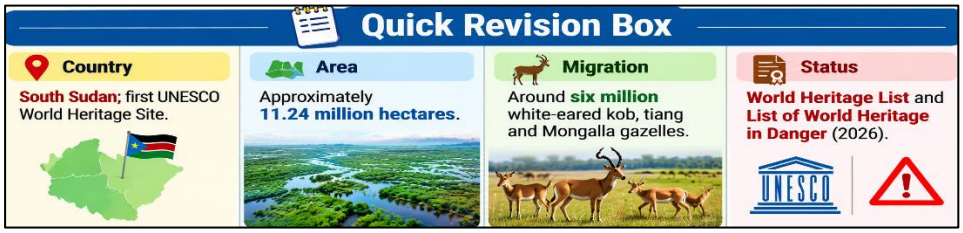
Challenges

- Insecurity and armed conflict hinder conservation and monitoring.
- Commercial poaching, infrastructure expansion and climate shocks threaten wildlife and habitats.
- Protecting migration corridors requires cooperation with local communities and sustainable livelihood options.

Way Forward

- Strengthen anti-poaching patrols, habitat monitoring and protected-area management.
- Involve local communities in conservation and benefit-sharing.

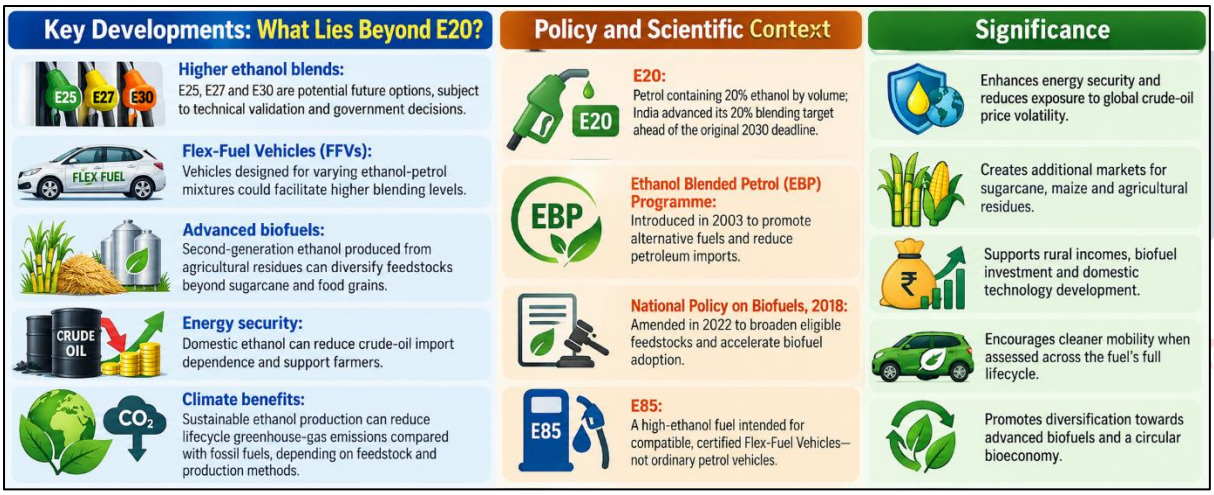
- Mobilise international support to address threats and meet UNESCO conservation requirements.



39. Beyond E20: India's Next Phase of Ethanol Blending and Clean Mobility – The Hindu

Why in News?

- Recently, discussions on India's ethanol-blending programme have focused on what lies beyond E20 petrol, including higher blends, vehicle compatibility, agricultural sustainability and consumer costs.
- Any move beyond E20 requires scientific assessment, compatible vehicles and appropriate policy decisions.



Challenges

- Vehicle compatibility, material durability and fuel-efficiency differences.
- Water consumption, food-versus-fuel concerns and feedstock-price volatility.
- Need for adequate supply infrastructure and transparent consumer communication.

Way Forward

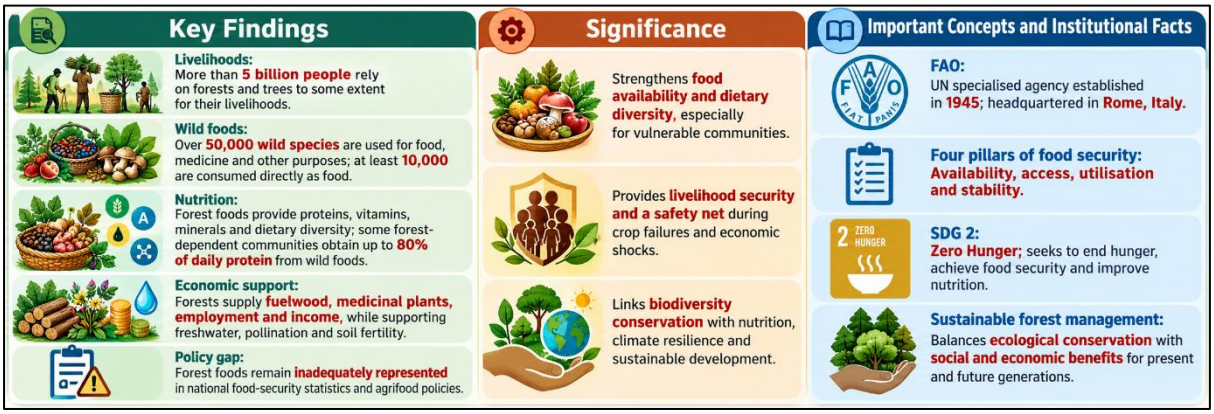
- Base higher blends on independent engine, emissions and lifecycle assessments.
- Scale residue-based ethanol and water-efficient feedstocks.
- Expand compatible vehicles and clearly communicate fuel standards.



40. Forests at the Heart of Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods: FAO – Down To Earth

Why in News?

Recently, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released Forests for Food: Nourishing People, Sustaining the Planet, urging countries to integrate forests into food-security and nutrition policies.

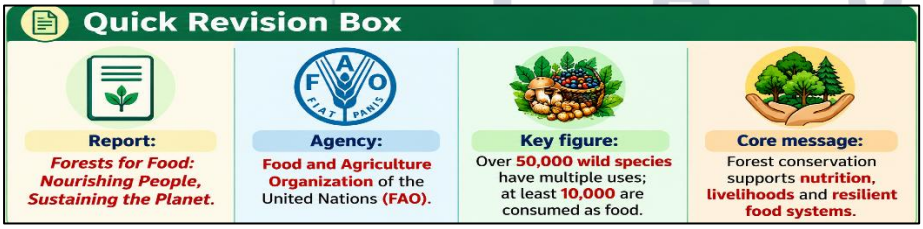


Challenges

- Deforestation, forest degradation, wildfires and climate change.
- Inadequate data on forest foods and their nutritional contribution.
- Unsustainable harvesting and competing land-use demands.

Way Forward

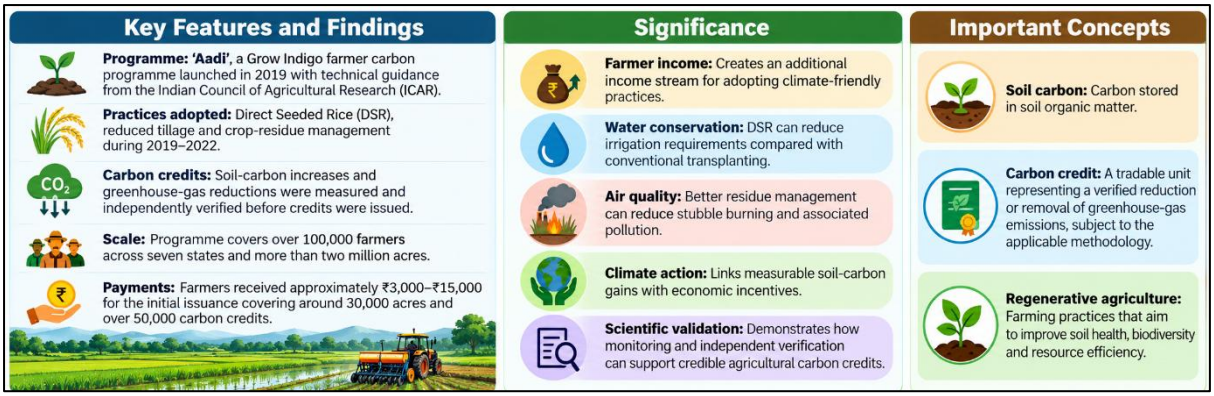
- Integrate forests into nutrition, agriculture and food-security policies.
- Promote community-based conservation, agroforestry and sustainable harvesting.
- Improve research, data collection and recognition of Indigenous and local knowledge.



41. India's First Soil Carbon Payments: Farmers at the Centre of Regenerative Agriculture - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, India's first soil-carbon payments were initiated for 2,550 farmers in Punjab and Haryana, with over ₹2.9 crore to be disbursed through digital payments.

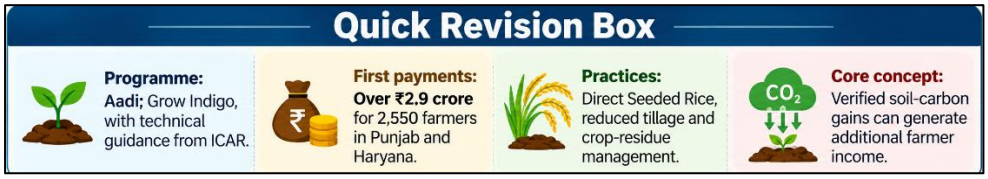


Challenges

- **Measurement:** Soil-carbon changes require reliable sampling, monitoring and verification over multiple years.
- **Smallholder access:** Verification costs and technical complexity may limit participation by small farmers.
- **Market uncertainty:** Carbon-credit prices and demand can fluctuate, affecting farmer earnings.
- **Additionality and permanence:** Credits must reflect genuine gains, with risks of carbon being released later addressed.

Way Forward

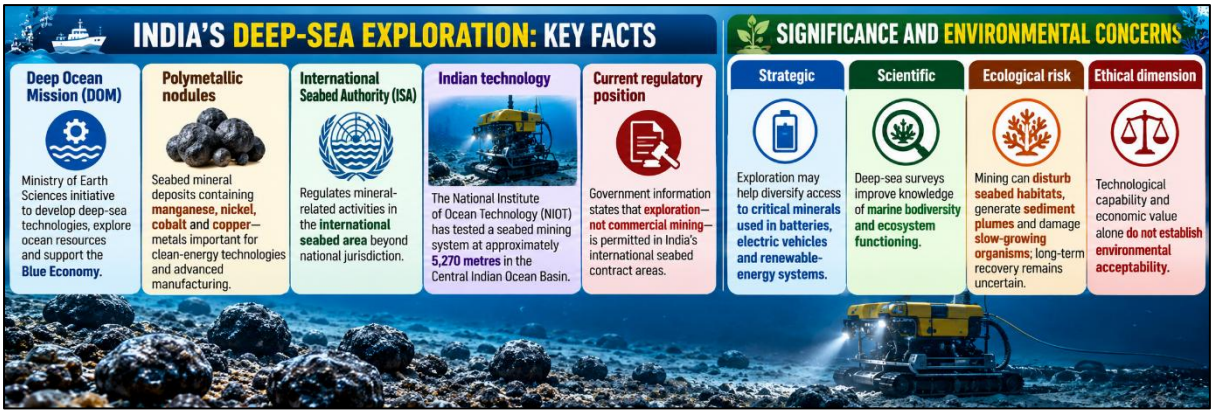
- Expand affordable soil testing, transparent verification and farmer-friendly carbon accounting.
- Ensure fair payment terms, clear contracts and timely disbursement.
- Strengthen ICAR, agricultural universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras and farmer-producer organisations in training and outreach.
- Integrate soil-carbon initiatives with water conservation, crop diversification and sustainable residue management.



42. Deep-Sea Discovery and Environmental Responsibility – The Hindu

Why in News?

- Recently, The Hindu highlighted the environmental and ethical questions raised by India's expanding deep-sea exploration: does the ability to extract seabed minerals mean that they should necessarily be mined?
- India's exploration of deep-ocean resources creates a policy challenge: balancing critical-mineral security with protection of poorly understood marine ecosystems.

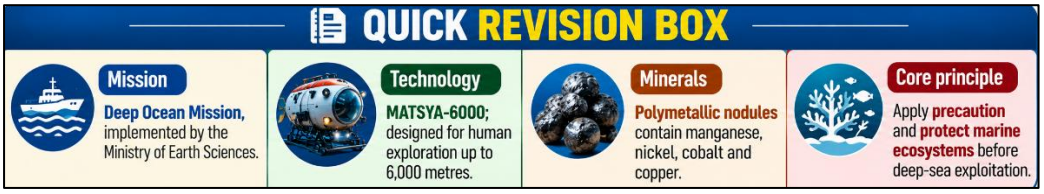


Challenges

- **Scientific uncertainty:** Deep-sea ecosystems remain insufficiently understood, making cumulative and long-term impacts difficult to predict.
- **Biodiversity loss:** Mining may damage habitats that recover extremely slowly.
- **Governance gaps:** Environmental safeguards, monitoring standards and international rules for commercial exploitation remain central concerns.
- **Resource trade-off:** Critical-mineral demand must be balanced against recycling, material efficiency and alternative sources.

Way Forward

- Apply the precautionary principle and require rigorous environmental impact assessments before any exploitation.
- Establish long-term biodiversity baselines, independent monitoring and protected seabed areas.
- Strengthen ISA rules, transparency, accountability and international scientific cooperation.
- Prioritise recycling, circular-economy practices and material substitution before opening new extraction frontiers.



43. Karnataka Rejects Western Ghats Report: Conservation, Livelihoods and Federalism – The Hindu

Why in News?

- Recently, both Houses of the Karnataka Legislature unanimously adopted a resolution seeking changes to the Centre's seventh draft notification on the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA), based on the Kasturirangan Committee Report.
- Karnataka sought a one-year period for a physical survey and urged the Centre to restrict the ESA largely to notified forest areas.

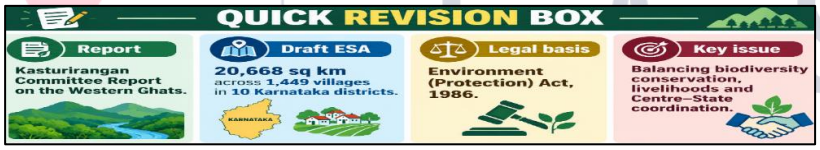


Challenges

- **Conservation versus livelihoods:** Restrictions may affect farming, plantations, housing and local infrastructure.
- **Ecological risk:** Excluding sensitive non-forest landscapes may leave biodiversity and wildlife corridors vulnerable.
- **Federal coordination:** Repeated draft notifications and State objections delay a stable protection framework.

Way Forward

- Complete transparent, village-wise and survey-number-wise physical verification.
- Use ecological criteria—not land ownership alone—to identify sensitive landscapes.
- Consult local communities, scientists and State governments while protecting critical habitats.
- Finalise clear, proportionate regulations with livelihood safeguards and effective monitoring.



DEFENSE & INTERNAL SECURITY

44. RAKSHA Roadmap: India's 10-Year Vision for Global Defence Diplomacy – Times of India

Why in News?

Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled RAKSHA, a strategic document outlining India's roadmap for global defence partnerships over the next decade.



Challenges

- **Technology gaps:** Advanced systems may still depend on foreign technologies and components.
- **Export competition:** India faces established global defence suppliers and complex export-control regimes.
- **Partnership balancing:** Different strategic interests among partner countries require careful diplomacy.
- **Implementation:** Long-term cooperation depends on timely delivery, interoperability and sustained after-sales support.

Way Forward

- Prioritise joint research, technology transfer and co-development with trusted partners.
- Align defence exports with quality standards, responsible use and transparent end-user safeguards.
- Strengthen training, logistics interoperability and maritime information-sharing.
- Establish measurable milestones to assess implementation of the roadmap.



45. IAF's Sarang Team at Egypt's El Alamein International Airshow – Indian Express

Why in News?

Recently, the Sarang Helicopter Display Team of the Indian Air Force (IAF) reached Egypt to participate in the second El Alamein International Airshow, held at El Alamein International Airport.

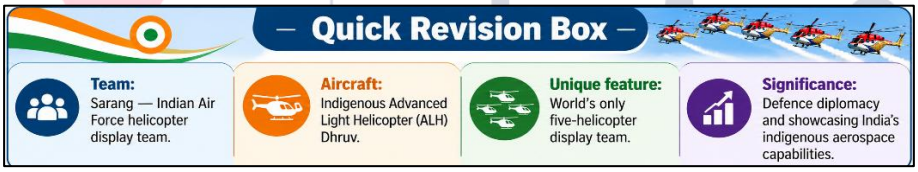


Challenges

- **Operational risk:** Close-formation manoeuvres require rigorous training, maintenance and safety protocols.
- **Technology competition:** Indigenous platforms must demonstrate reliability, performance and lifecycle support to compete internationally.
- **Export conversion:** Public demonstrations need to be supported by certification, production capacity and after-sales services.

Way Forward

- Strengthen flight-safety standards, maintenance and pilot training.
- Use international airshows to develop defence-industry partnerships and export opportunities.
- Expand India–Egypt cooperation in aerospace technology, training and maintenance.



46. India–Japan Air Exercise Veer Guardian 2026 – Times of India

Why in News?

Recently, the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) conducted the 14-day bilateral air exercise Veer Guardian 2026 at Air Force Station Jodhpur, Rajasthan, from 9–22 September.



Challenges

- **Operational differences:** Aircraft systems, procedures and communication protocols require careful coordination.
- **Regional complexity:** Indo-Pacific security challenges demand sustained cooperation and strategic sensitivity.
- **Continuity:** Interoperability gains require repeated exercises and follow-up training.

Way Forward

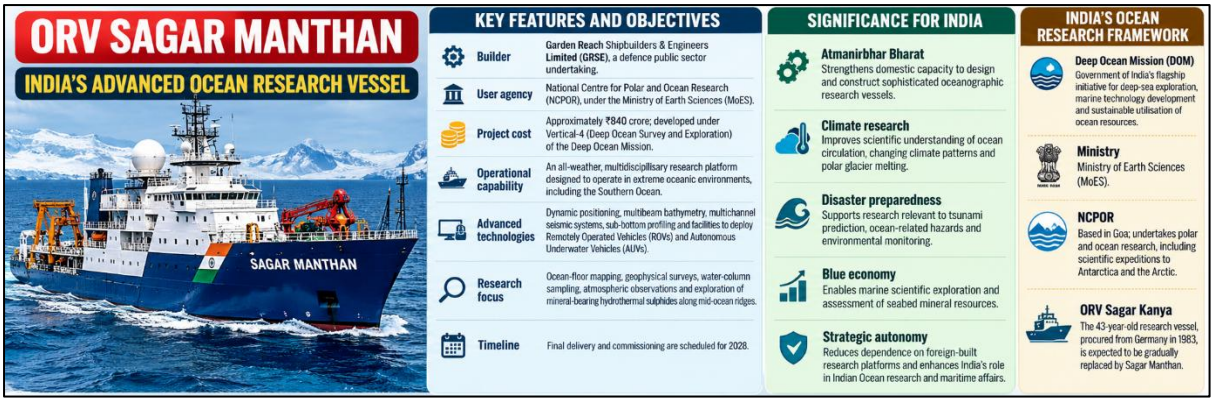
- Expand complex joint missions, information-sharing and professional exchanges.
- Deepen defence technology cooperation while respecting each country's operational requirements.
- Sustain regular exercises to strengthen regional stability and mutual preparedness.



47. ORV Sagar Manthan: Advancing India's Indigenous Ocean Research Capabilities - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launched Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan at Rishi Bankim Shipyard, Kolkata, to strengthen India's indigenous oceanographic research capabilities.



Challenges

- **Technological complexity:** Maintaining sophisticated navigation, survey and underwater exploration systems.
- **Harsh conditions:** Operating safely in extreme ocean environments and the Southern Ocean.
- **Environmental risks:** Preventing ecological damage during seabed mineral exploration.
- **Research capacity:** Sustaining skilled personnel, equipment maintenance and long-term scientific funding.

Way Forward

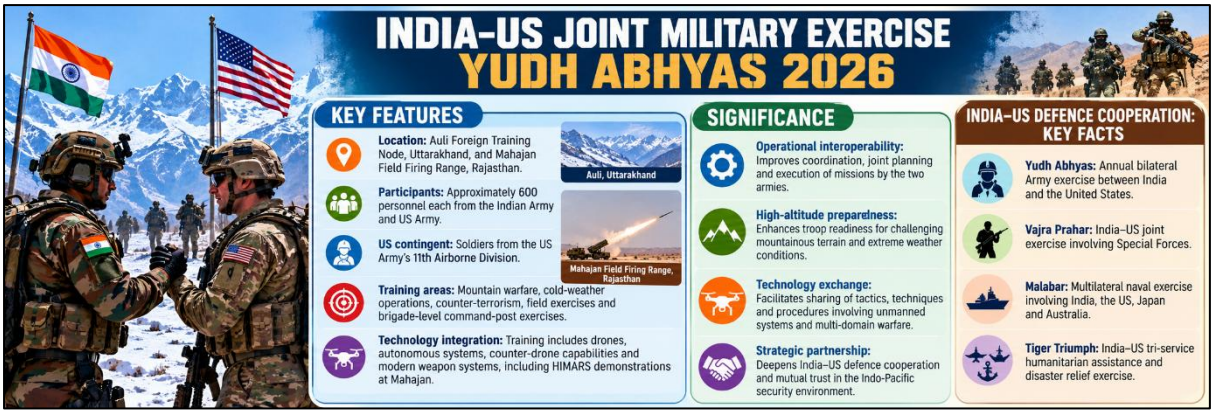
- Strengthen indigenous marine instrumentation, shipbuilding and ocean-data processing.
- Promote collaboration among research institutions, universities and industry.
- Establish robust environmental baselines before considering seabed exploitation.
- Ensure open scientific data, international research cooperation and sustainable ocean governance.



48. Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2026: Strengthening India–US Cooperation in High-Altitude Warfare – India Today

Why in News?

Recently, India and the United States commenced the 22nd edition of Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2026, a two-week bilateral Army exercise focused on high-altitude warfare, mountain operations and multi-domain combat capabilities.

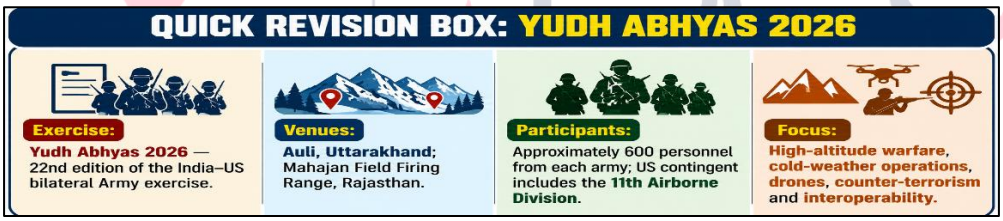


Challenges

- **Terrain and climate:** Extreme cold, high altitude and reduced oxygen levels affect troop endurance and equipment performance.
- **Interoperability:** Differences in military doctrines, communication systems and operational procedures can complicate joint missions.
- **Technology integration:** Secure coordination of drones, surveillance systems and advanced weapon platforms requires compatible procedures.

Way Forward

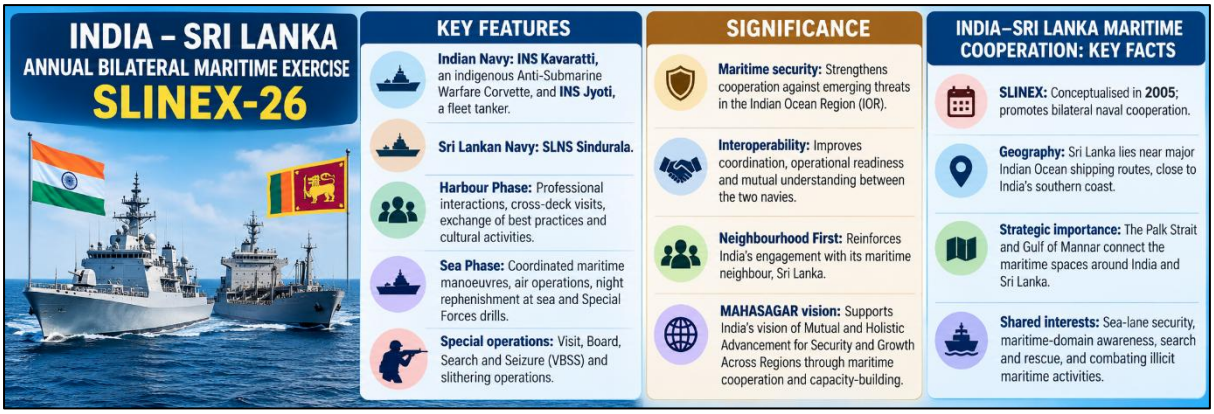
- Expand joint mountain-warfare and cold-weather training.
- Improve secure communications, logistics coordination and common operational procedures.
- Strengthen cooperation in unmanned systems, cyber defence and multi-domain operations while maintaining India's strategic autonomy.



49. SLINEX-26: Strengthening India–Sri Lanka Maritime Cooperation - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the 13th edition of the Sri Lanka–India Bilateral Maritime Exercise (SLINEX-26) was conducted at Visakhapatnam from 17–21 September 2026. The exercise concluded on 21 September.

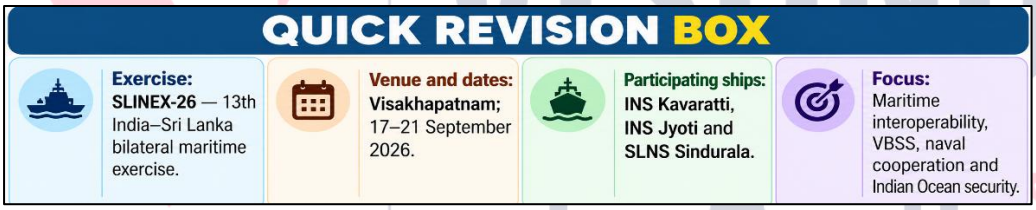


Challenges

- Illegal fishing and disputes affecting coastal fishing communities.
- Drug trafficking, smuggling and other transnational maritime threats.
- Growing strategic competition and external-power presence in the Indian Ocean.

Way Forward

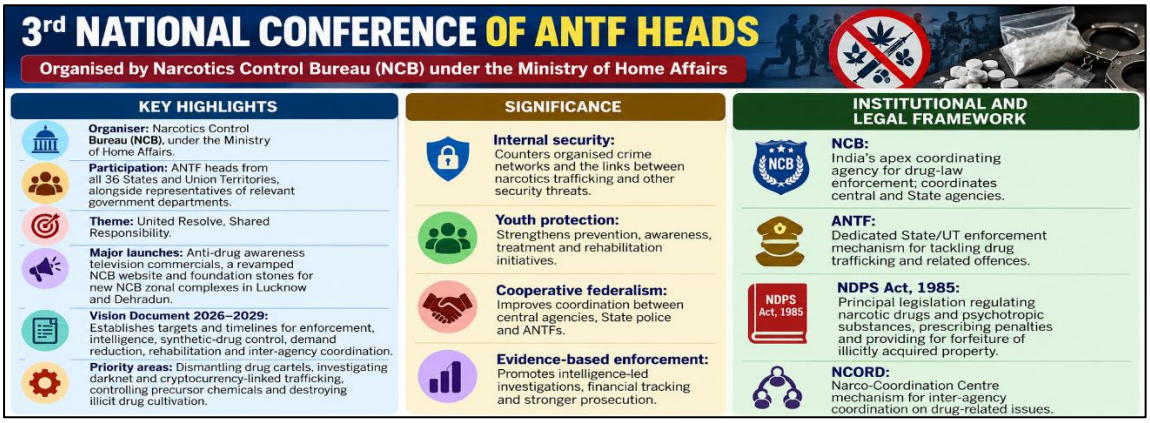
- Enhance information-sharing, coordinated patrols and maritime-domain awareness.
- Expand joint training, search-and-rescue operations and capacity-building.
- Address fisheries disputes through sustained dialogue and livelihood-sensitive solutions.



50. 3rd National Conference of ANTF Heads: Strengthening India's Fight Against Drug Trafficking - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the 3rd National Conference of Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) Heads in New Delhi to strengthen coordination among States/UTs and advance the goal of a drug-free India.

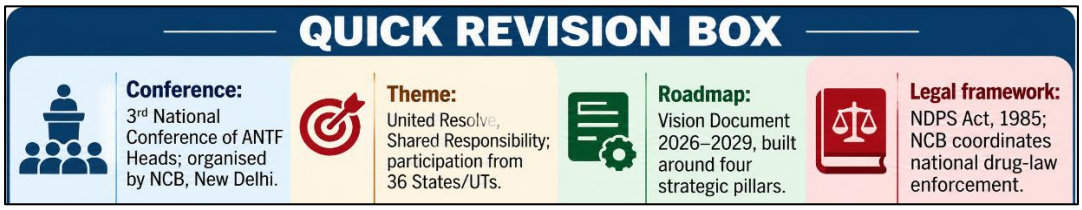


Challenges

- Cross-border trafficking, organised cartels and interstate distribution networks.
- Darknet transactions, cryptocurrency payments and emerging synthetic drugs.
- Gaps in intelligence-sharing, forensic capacity, prosecution and rehabilitation services.

Way Forward

- Implement the 2026–2029 Vision Document through measurable targets, timelines and accountability.
- Strengthen financial investigations, digital forensics and coordination between central and State agencies.
- Combine strict enforcement with prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and community awareness.



51. Exercise VARUNA-26: Strengthening India–France Maritime Cooperation – News On Air

Why in News?

Recently, INS Trishul arrived at Toulon, France, to participate in the 24th edition of Exercise VARUNA, the annual bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the French Navy.



Challenges

- Ensuring interoperability between different naval platforms and communication systems.
- Addressing submarine threats, maritime surveillance gaps and evolving naval technologies.
- Maintaining a stable maritime environment amid increasing strategic competition.

Way Forward

- Expand joint anti-submarine warfare, maritime surveillance and complex sea-phase drills.
- Strengthen secure information-sharing and defence technology cooperation.
- Deepen coordination to protect sea lines of communication and uphold international maritime law.


QUICK REVISION BOX
Exercise:
VARUNA-26 – 24th India–France bilateral naval exercise.
Location:
Toulon, France; INS Trishul arrived on 22 September 2026.
Focus:
Anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface operations, live firing and interoperability.
Static fact:
VARUNA began in 1993 and was renamed in 2001.

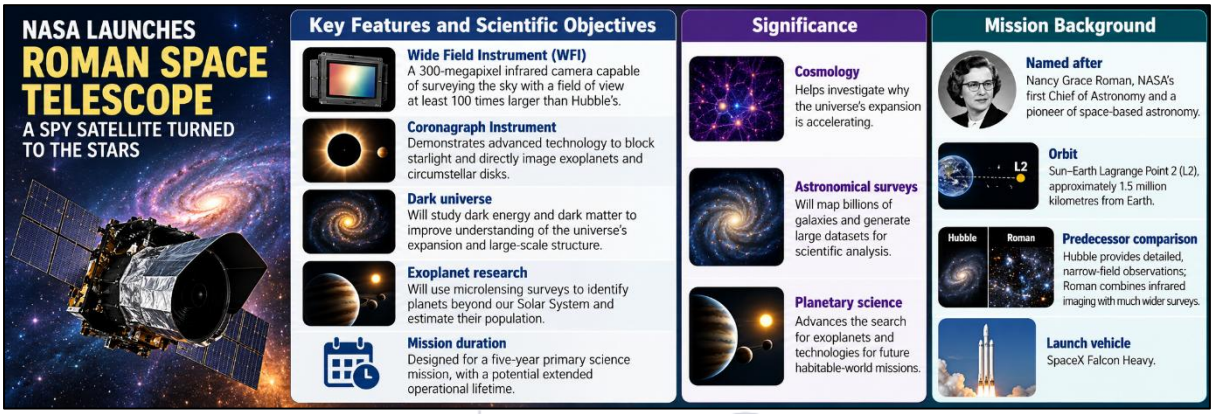
VISHNU IAS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

52. NASA's Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope: Exploring the Dark Universe – DD News

Why in News?

Recently, NASA launched the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope aboard a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on 30 August 2026. The observatory is designed to investigate dark energy, dark matter and planets beyond our Solar System.



Challenges

- Managing enormous volumes of astronomical data.
- Calibrating sensitive instruments and maintaining precise pointing.
- Distinguishing faint cosmic signals from instrumental noise and foreground objects.

Way Forward

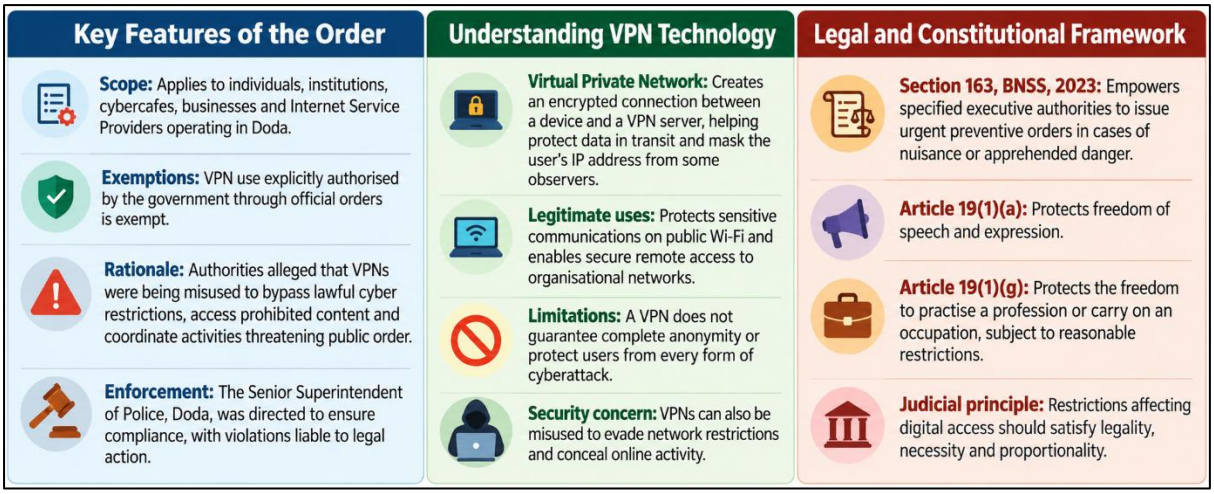
- Strengthen international scientific collaboration and open-data access.
- Use AI and advanced computing to analyse large-scale astronomical datasets.
- Apply findings to cosmology, exoplanet research and future space observatories.



53. VPN Restrictions in Doda: Balancing Cybersecurity and Digital Rights – Indian Express

Why in News?

Recently, the Doda district administration in Jammu and Kashmir imposed a two-month ban on Virtual Private Network (VPN) use, citing cybersecurity, unlawful online activities and public-order concerns. The reported order was issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

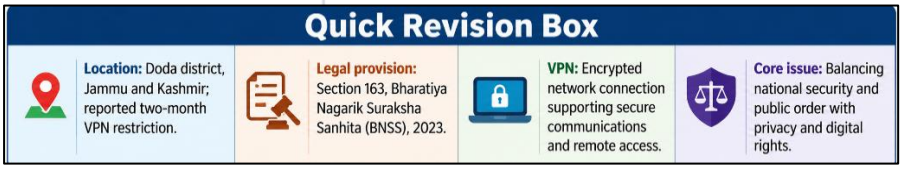


Challenges

- **Digital rights:** Broad restrictions may affect privacy, expression and legitimate internet use.
- **Economic impact:** Businesses, remote workers and institutions relying on secure VPN connections may face disruptions.
- **Enforcement:** Distinguishing legitimate VPN use from unlawful activity can be difficult.
- **Effectiveness:** A VPN ban alone may not eliminate cybercrime or prevent sophisticated actors from using alternative technologies.

Way Forward

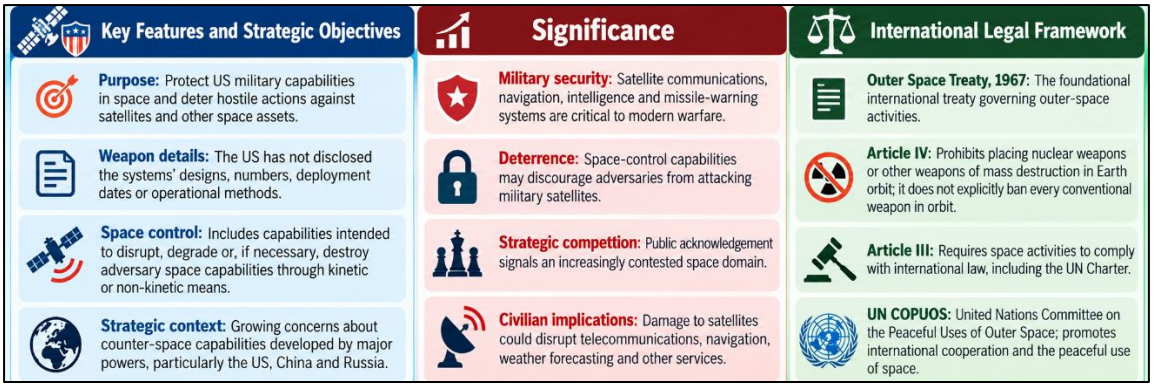
- Prefer targeted, intelligence-based restrictions over blanket prohibitions wherever feasible.
- Publish clear exemptions and provide transparent procedures for authorised VPN use.
- Ensure restrictions are necessary, proportionate, time-bound and subject to review.
- Strengthen cyber-forensics, lawful investigations and public awareness of cybersecurity.



54. US Deployment of On-Orbit Weapons: Rising Militarisation of Outer Space – NDTV World

Why in News?

Recently, the United States publicly confirmed that it has deployed "on-orbit space control weapons" capable of defending its joint military forces against hostile actions, according to an announcement by US Air Force Secretary Troy Meink at the Air, Space and Cyber Conference.

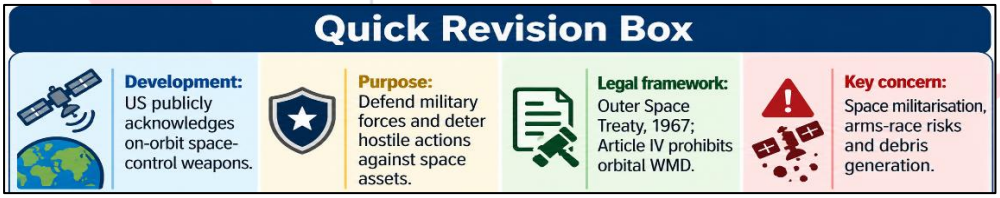


Challenges

- **Arms race:** Competing space-control capabilities could trigger military escalation.
- **Space debris:** Kinetic attacks on satellites may create debris that threatens other spacecraft.
- **Dual-use ambiguity:** Civilian satellites can serve military purposes, complicating threat assessment.
- **Governance gap:** Existing treaties do not comprehensively regulate all conventional space-based weapons.

Way Forward

- Strengthen international dialogue on space-based weapons and arms-control mechanisms.
- Promote transparency, confidence-building measures and advance notification of risky activities.
- Develop norms against destructive anti-satellite tests and minimise orbital debris.
- Protect critical civilian satellite infrastructure through resilience and international cooperation.



55. Elias 2-24 b: Youngest Known Planet Offers Insights into Planet Formation - NASA

Why in News?

Recently, NASA announced the confirmation of Elias 2-24 b, a planet less than one million years old, making it the youngest known planet confirmed so far. The discovery was reported on 16 September 2026.

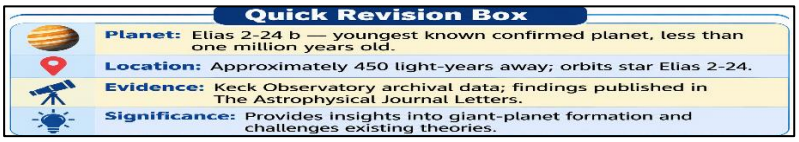


Challenges

- Dust and gas surrounding young stars obscure newly forming planets.
- Direct imaging of faint planets is difficult because of intense starlight.
- Existing planetary formation models cannot fully explain the rapid formation of some giant planets.

Way Forward

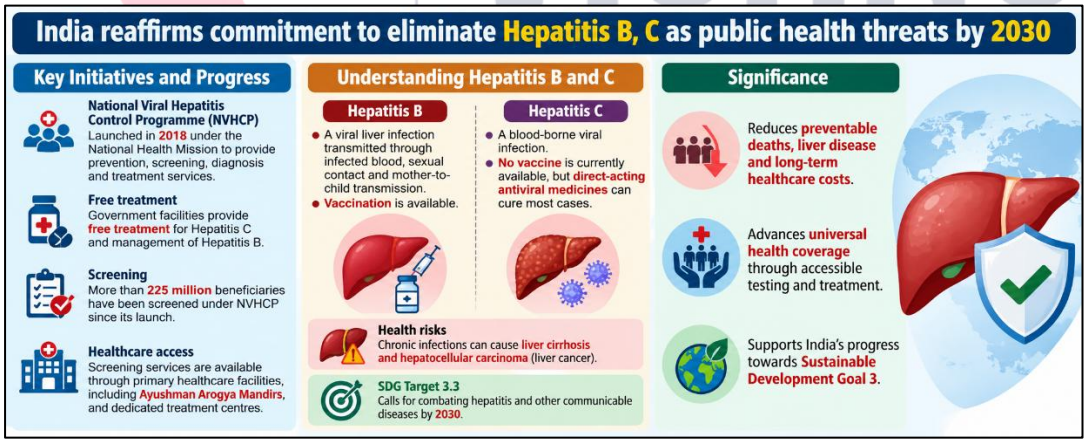
- Combine observations from ground-based and space-based telescopes.
- Use advanced instruments, including the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, to detect more young exoplanets.
- Refine planet-formation models using observations and computer simulations.



56. India's Commitment to Eliminate Hepatitis B and C by 2030 – Indian Express

Why in News?

Recently, India reaffirmed its commitment to eliminate Hepatitis B and C as public health threats by 2030 at the 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), emphasising early diagnosis, affordable treatment and integrated healthcare.

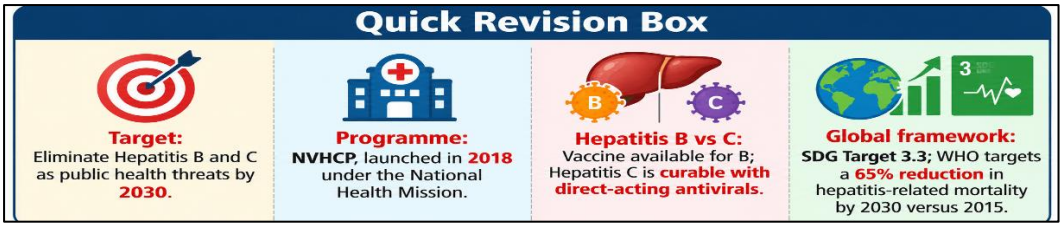


Challenges

- Low awareness, late diagnosis and social stigma.
- Unequal access to screening and treatment in underserved areas.
- Continued transmission through unsafe injections and inadequate infection control.

Way Forward

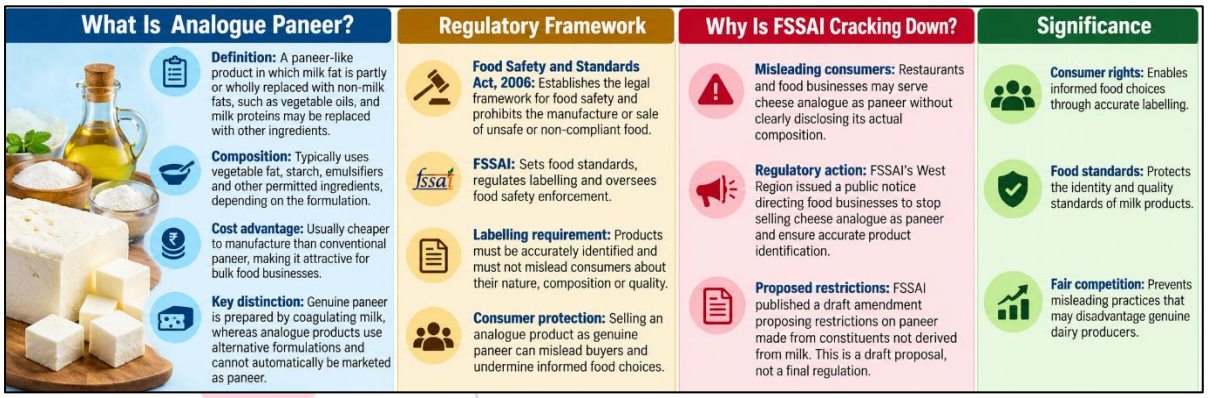
- Expand screening, Hepatitis B vaccination and prevention of mother-to-child transmission.
- Ensure affordable diagnostics, timely treatment and reliable follow-up.
- Strengthen blood safety, public awareness and disease surveillance.



57. Analogue Paneer: FSSAI Crackdown on Misleading Dairy Substitutes – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) intensified action against food businesses selling analogue paneer as genuine paneer, raising concerns over food labelling, consumer awareness and compliance with dairy standards.



Challenges

- Detecting analogue products in complex prepared foods.
- Ensuring compliance across restaurants, caterers and supply chains.
- Balancing affordable food alternatives with transparent labelling and standardisation.

Way Forward

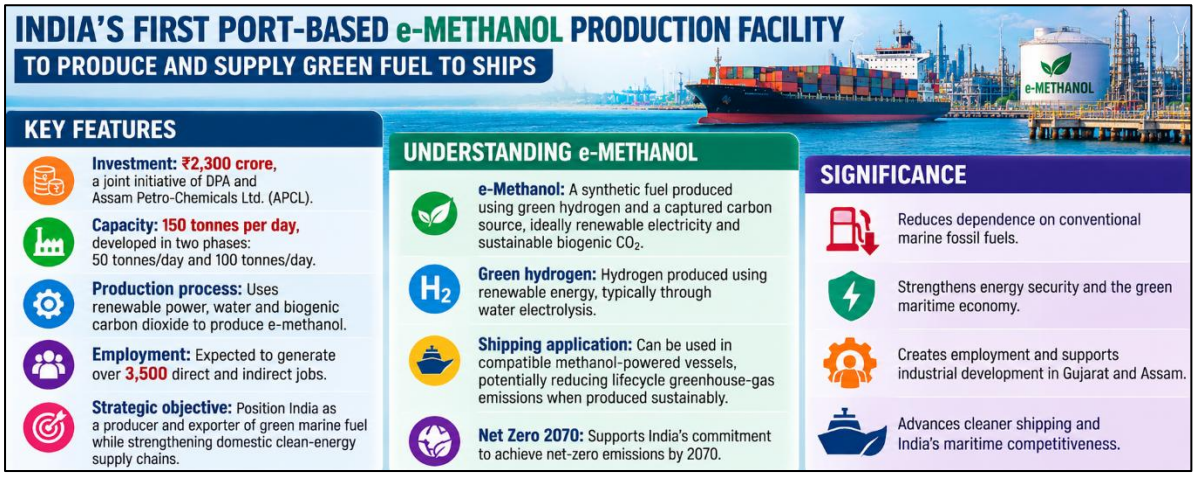
- Strengthen inspections, laboratory testing and enforcement of food standards.
- Require clear disclosure of analogue ingredients on menus and product packaging.
- Improve consumer awareness and consult stakeholders before finalising regulatory changes.



58. India's First Port-Based e-Methanol Plant: Greener Fuel for Shipping - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the foundation stone was laid for India's first port-based e-methanol production facility at Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla, Gujarat, to supply cleaner fuel to ships operating along the Asia–Europe trade corridor.

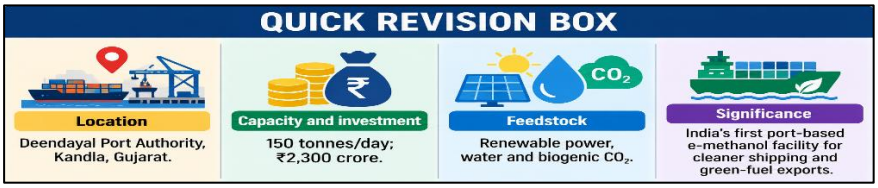


Challenges

- High initial investment and renewable-energy requirements.
- Reliable supply of green hydrogen and sustainable carbon dioxide.
- Fuel storage, bunkering infrastructure and lifecycle-emissions verification.
- Ensuring cost competitiveness and sufficient demand from shipping operators.

Way Forward

- Expand renewable power and green-hydrogen production.
- Develop methanol bunkering facilities and safety standards at ports.
- Promote green-fuel adoption through incentives, research and international maritime cooperation.



59. India's First LNG-Powered Train: Advancing Cleaner Railway Transportation – DD News

Why in News?

Recently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah flagged off India's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)-powered train from Sabarmati Railway Station, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, alongside railway development projects worth ₹1,472 crore.

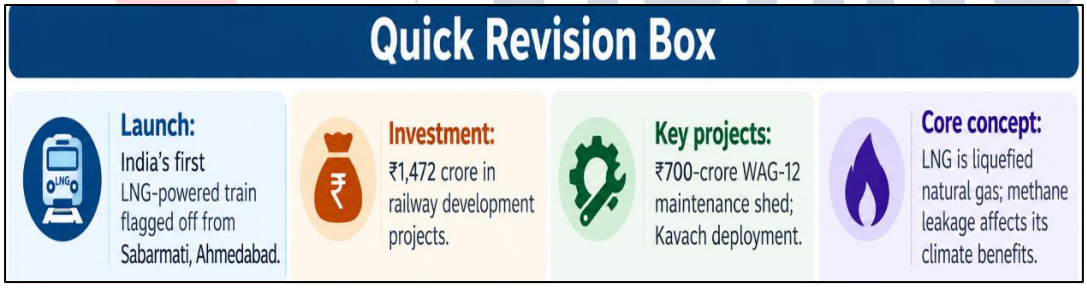


Challenges

- High conversion costs and limited LNG refuelling infrastructure.
- Methane leakage can reduce climate benefits.
- Ensuring fuel safety, operational reliability and cost competitiveness.

Way Forward

- Conduct performance and lifecycle-emissions assessments before wider deployment.
- Expand safe LNG storage and refuelling infrastructure where economically viable.
- Prioritise railway electrification and renewable-powered operations for long-term decarbonisation.



HISTORY & CULTURE

60. Rani Avantibai Lodhi: Linking the Legacy of 1857 with Women's Valour in Operation Sindoor – Times of India

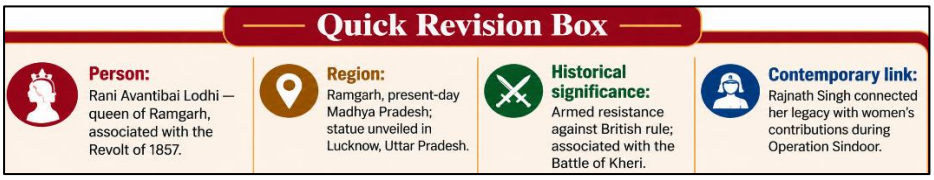
Why in News?

Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a statue of Rani Avantibai Lodhi in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, and highlighted the connection between her resistance against British rule and the courage displayed by women during Operation Sindoor.



Significance

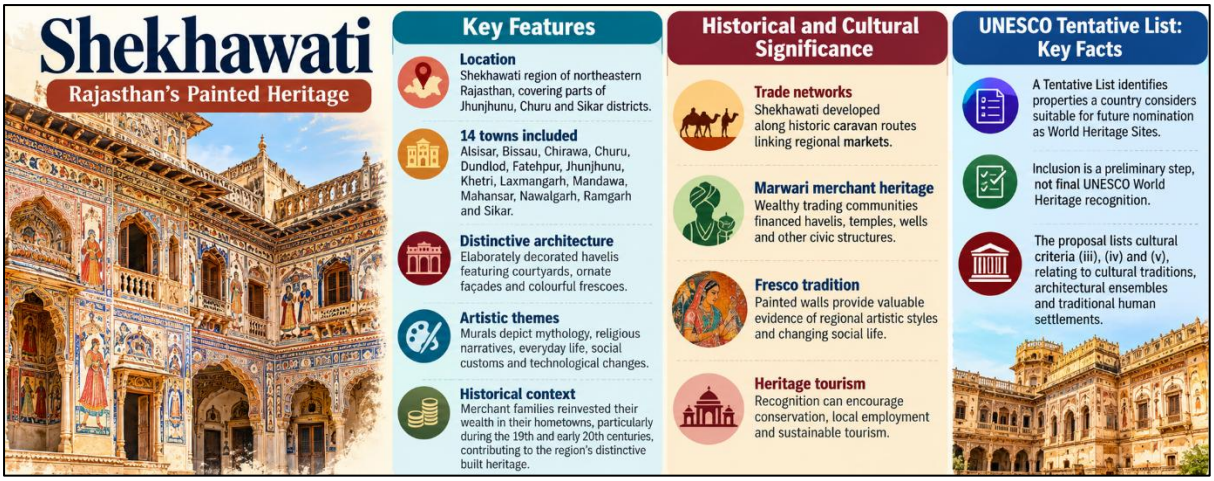
- Preserves the contribution of women freedom fighters to India's anti-colonial struggle.
- Connects historical resistance with contemporary women's empowerment.
- Encourages recognition of regional and less-highlighted figures in the national freedom movement.



61. Shekhawati Havelis: Rajasthan's Painted Heritage Enters UNESCO Tentative List – The Print

Why in News?

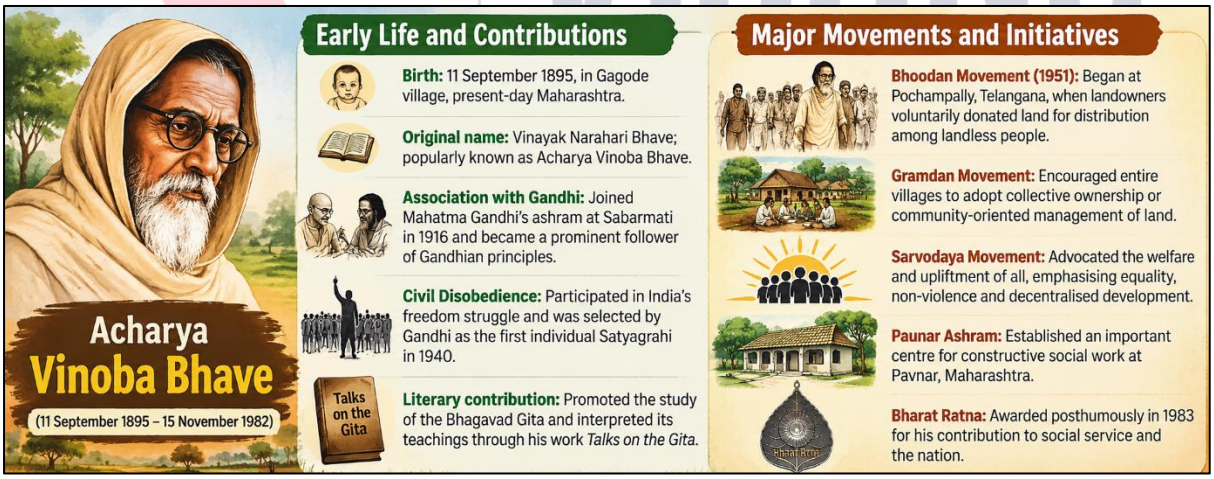
Recently, UNESCO added "The Painted Haveli Towns of Shekhawati" to its World Heritage Tentative List, recognising the cultural and architectural significance of Rajasthan's historic merchant towns.



62. Acharya Vinoba Bhave: Pioneer of the Bhoodan and Sarvodaya Movements – PM India

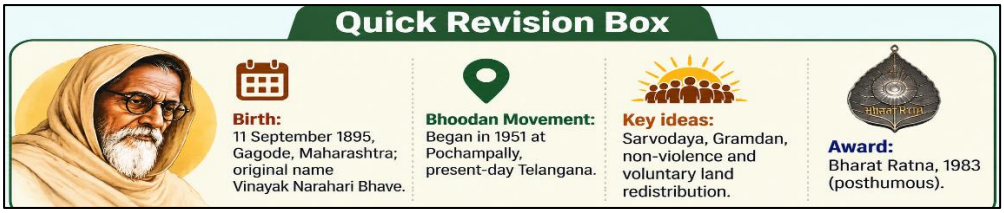
Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister paid tributes to Acharya Vinoba Bhave on his birth anniversary, recalling his contributions to social reform, non-violence, rural development and voluntary land redistribution.



Significance of His Ideas

- **Land reforms:** Sought to address rural inequality through voluntary redistribution rather than coercion.
- **Gandhian philosophy:** Demonstrated the role of non-violent action in resolving social and economic problems.
- **Rural empowerment:** Promoted village self-reliance, community participation and decentralised decision-making.
- **Ethical leadership:** Emphasised simplicity, social responsibility and service to disadvantaged communities.



63. Ramanathaswamy Temple: India's Spiritual Heritage and Cultural Diplomacy – Times of India

Why in News?

- Recently, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared the heritage of the Ramanathaswamy Temple with Chinese President Xi Jinping.
- The official account of the India–China bilateral meeting confirms that the two leaders met on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in New Delhi on 12 September 2026. However, the official meeting summary does not independently confirm the specific temple-related exchange.



Challenges

- Managing large pilgrim numbers while protecting the temple's historic structures.
- Balancing tourism infrastructure with conservation and the local environment.
- Avoiding unsupported historical claims when presenting heritage in international forums.

Way Forward

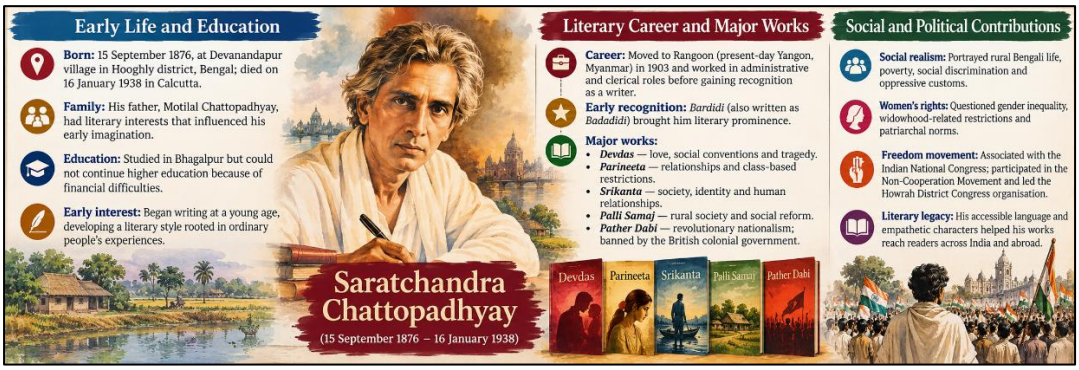
- Strengthen conservation, visitor management and sustainable pilgrimage facilities.
- Use verified information from the Archaeological Survey of India and official temple authorities.
- Promote India's cultural heritage through accurate, respectful international outreach.



64. Saratchandra Chattopadhyay: Life, Literary Contributions and Social Reform – PM India

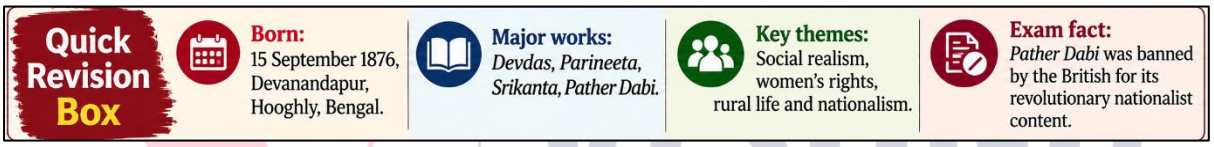
Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Saratchandra Chattopadhyay on his 150th birth anniversary, highlighting his contribution to literature, social reform, women's rights and nationalism.



Cultural Significance

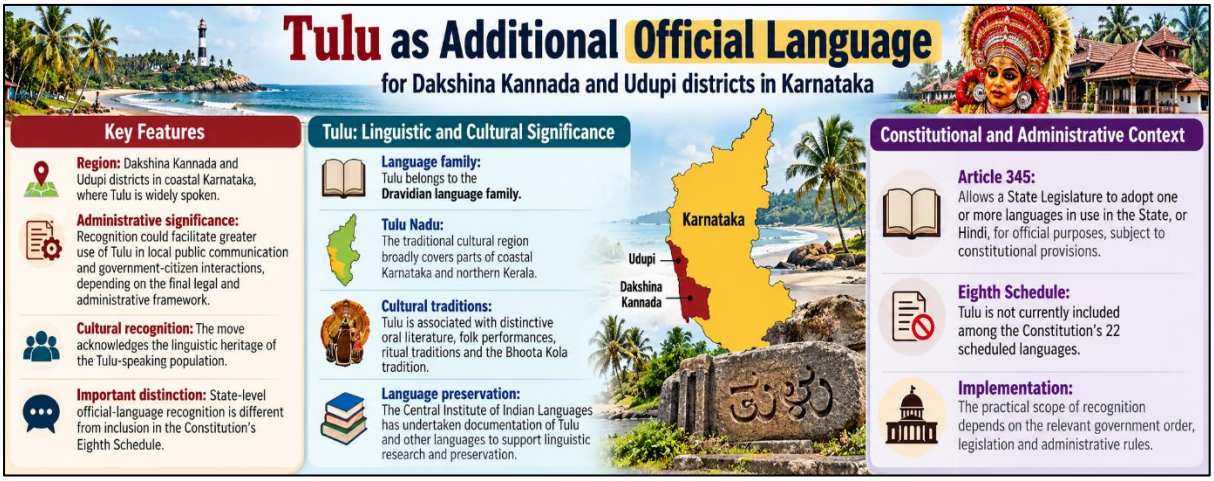
- Demonstrates the role of literature in social awakening and anti-colonial nationalism.
- His works remain valuable for understanding colonial-era Bengali society and reformist thought.



65. Tulu as an Additional Official Language in Coastal Karnataka – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, the Karnataka government announced a decision to recognise Tulu as an additional official language in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, highlighting the importance of linguistic identity and regional cultural preservation. The Karnataka government's official news portal reported a decision concerning Tulu's official-language recognition.

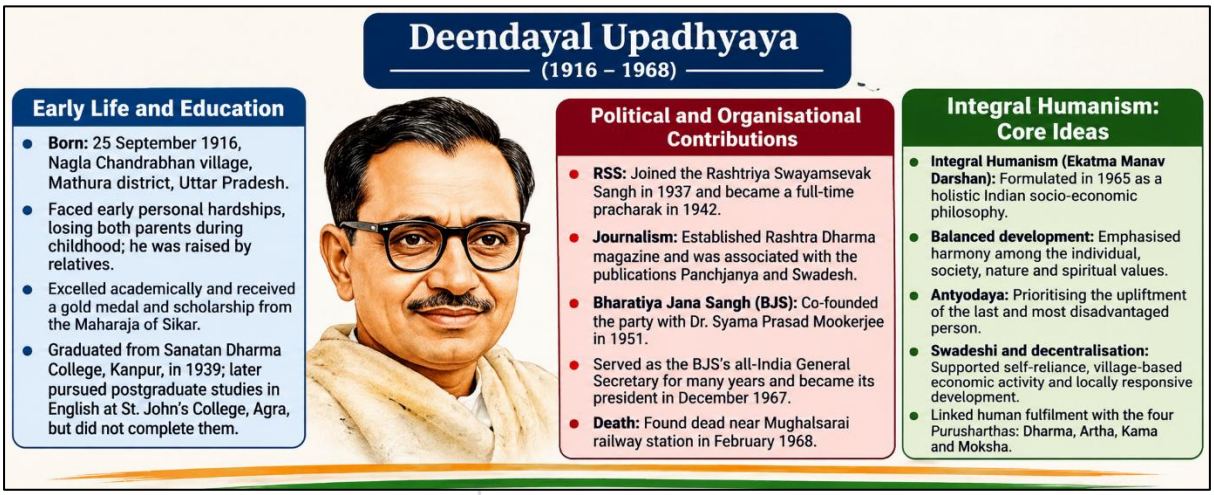




66. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya: Integral Humanism and Antyodaya – PM India

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya on his birth anniversary, recalling his contributions to Indian political thought and his emphasis on the welfare of the weakest sections of society.



Legacy and Significance

- Influenced the ideological development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the predecessor of the BJP.
- His ideas remain relevant to debates on inclusive growth, rural development and ethical governance.



PLACES IN NEWS

67. Kharg Island and Larak Island, Iran: Strategic Importance – NDTV World

Why in News?

Recently, US President Donald Trump shared an AI-generated video depicting an attack on Kharg Island after US forces struck Iranian launchers on Larak Island. The video did not itself establish that a new attack on Kharg Island had occurred.



Geographical Location and Strategic Importance

- **Kharg Island:** Located in the northern Persian Gulf; it hosts Iran's principal crude oil export terminal, making it vital to the country's oil revenues.
- **Larak Island:** Located in the Strait of Hormuz, near Iran's southern coast; its position is strategically important for monitoring maritime traffic.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** Connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea; a critical global oil and gas transit route.
- **Recent military context:** US Central Command reported striking Iranian military targets on Kharg Island earlier in 2026 while preserving oil infrastructure, and striking launchers on Larak Island in August.

Why These Islands Matter

- **Energy security:** Disruption around Kharg could affect Iranian oil exports and global energy markets.
- **Maritime security:** Military activity near Larak can threaten shipping and raise insurance and transport costs.
- **Regional geopolitics:** Escalation could affect Gulf countries, international trade and energy-importing nations such as India.

68. Pichavaram Mangroves: Economic Value of Ecosystem Services – The Hindu

Why in News?

Recently, a study estimated the economic value of ecosystem services provided by the Pichavaram mangrove ecosystem at ₹2,485.38 crore, highlighting the economic importance of conserving coastal wetlands.

Location and Key Features



- **Location:** Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu, between the Vellar and Coleroon estuaries.
- **Area:** Approximately 1,478.64 hectares; designated a Ramsar Site in 2022.
- **Biodiversity:** Supports mangrove vegetation, fish, crustaceans and resident and migratory birds.
- **Livelihoods:** Provides breeding and nursery grounds for aquatic species and supports fishing communities.

Ecosystem Services and Significance

- **Coastal protection:** Reduces shoreline erosion and acts as a natural buffer against coastal hazards.
- **Climate regulation:** Stores carbon in vegetation and waterlogged soils, contributing to climate-change mitigation.
- **Economic benefits:** Fisheries, tourism, biodiversity conservation and disaster-risk reduction generate direct and indirect value.
- **Policy relevance:** Economic valuation helps governments account for natural capital in development and conservation decisions.

Conservation Context

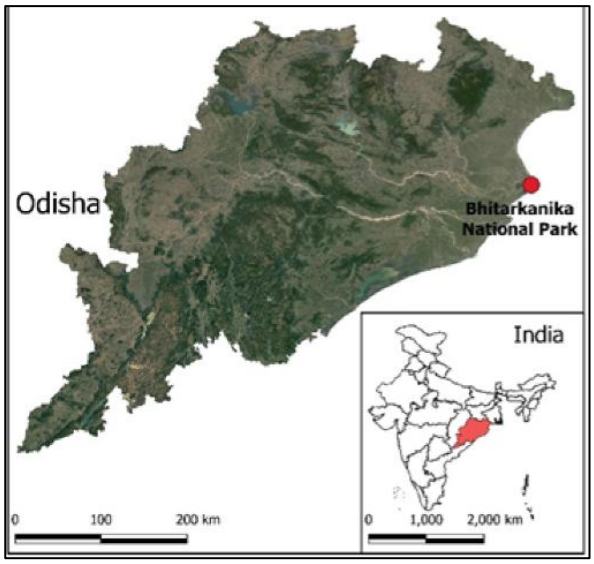
- Mangroves are salt-tolerant coastal ecosystems adapted to tidal conditions.
- India's MISHTI initiative promotes mangrove restoration along coastlines and salt-pan lands, strengthening ecological resilience and local livelihoods.

69. Bhitarkanika National Park: Saltwater Crocodile Hatchlings – Deccan herald

Why in News?

Recently, hundreds of baby saltwater crocodiles hatched in Bhitarkanika National Park, Odisha, highlighting the importance of the region's mangrove ecosystem for crocodile breeding and conservation.

Location and Ecological Features



- **Location:** Kendrapara district, coastal Odisha, in the deltaic region of the Brahmani, Baitarani and Dhamra river systems.
- **National Park:** The core area was declared a national park in 1998.
- **Ramsar Site:** Bhitarkanika was designated a wetland of international importance in 2002.
- **Habitat:** Mangrove forests, tidal creeks, estuaries and mudflats support rich biodiversity.

Saltwater Crocodile:

- **Scientific name:** Crocodylus porosus.
- Bhitarkanika supports India's largest population of saltwater crocodiles.
- Crocodiles nest along riverbanks and muddy creeks; hatchlings emerge after incubation of eggs.
- The species is listed under Schedule I of India's Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and in Appendix I of CITES.

Conservation Significance

- Successful hatching indicates the ecological importance of protected nesting habitats.
- Mangroves provide shelter, breeding sites and food-web support for reptiles, birds and aquatic species.
- Protecting nesting areas and reducing human disturbance are essential for long-term crocodile conservation.

70. Luxembourg: Xavier Bettel and India–Luxembourg Relations – Times of India

Why in News?

Recently, Xavier Bettel, Luxembourg's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, reportedly praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, drawing attention to India–Luxembourg diplomatic relations.



Xavier Bettel:

- **Full name:** Xavier Bettel.
- **Nationality:** Luxembourgish; a prominent liberal politician.
- **Previous role**: Served as Prime Minister of Luxembourg from 2013 to 2023.
- **Current role:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in Luxembourg's government.

Luxembourg: Geographic and Political Profile

- **Location:** Landlocked country in Western Europe, bordered by Belgium, France and Germany.
- **Capital:** Luxembourg City.
- **Political system:** Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy.
- **European role:** Founding member of the European Union and a member of NATO.

India–Luxembourg Relations

- **Diplomatic relations:** Established in 1948.
- **Finance:** Luxembourg is an important source of foreign investment and portfolio investment for India.
- **Space cooperation:** The two countries signed an MoU in 2022 to cooperate in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.
- **Significance:** Cooperation spans finance, investment, space technology and multilateral engagement.

71. Mount Anak Krakatau: Volcanic Ash Disrupts Indonesian Aviation – The Print

Why in News?

Recently, volcanic ash from Mount Anak Krakatau forced temporary closures at Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport and other airports in Indonesia. Operations resumed after authorities verified that conditions were safe.



Location and Key Features

- **Location:** Sunda Strait, between Java and Sumatra, Indonesia.
- **Origin:** Anak Krakatau ("Child of Krakatau") emerged within the caldera left by the catastrophic 1883 Krakatau eruption.
- **Volcanic setting:** Part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, a zone of intense tectonic and volcanic activity.
- **Eruption history:** The volcano has experienced repeated eruptions since its emergence in 1927.

Significance and Impacts

- **Aviation safety:** Fine volcanic ash can damage jet engines, reduce visibility and affect aircraft sensors.
- **Economic disruption:** Flight cancellations and diversions affect passengers, airlines, tourism and cargo movement.
- **Disaster monitoring:** Indonesia's geological and meteorological agencies monitor eruptions, ash-cloud movement and aviation risks.
- **Historical relevance:** The 1883 Krakatau eruption triggered devastating tsunamis, demonstrating the wider hazards associated with volcanic activity.

72. Indrayani River: Mass Fish Deaths Near Alandi, Maharashtra – Times of India

Why in News?

Recently, mass fish deaths were reported in the Indrayani River near Alandi Temple, Maharashtra, following similar incidents in the Mula River, raising concerns about river pollution and aquatic ecosystem health.

Location and Key Features



- **Location:** The Indrayani flows through Pune district in Maharashtra and is associated with the pilgrimage town of Alandi.
- **River system:** It is a tributary of the Bhima River, which joins the Krishna River system.
- **Religious significance:** Alandi is closely associated with Sant Dnyaneshwar, the 13th-century Marathi saint and poet.
- **Regional importance:** The river supports local communities, religious activities and freshwater biodiversity.

Environmental Concerns

- **Possible causes:** Untreated sewage, industrial effluents, low dissolved oxygen and sudden changes in water quality can cause fish mortality; the precise cause requires official water-quality testing.
- **Official evidence:** The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board lists the Indrayani stretch from Alandi towards its confluence with the Bhima among polluted river stretches.
- **Ecological impact:** Fish deaths can disrupt aquatic food chains and indicate risks to river biodiversity and communities dependent on the river.

Significance

- Highlights the need for effective sewage treatment, pollution monitoring and protection of rivers with religious and ecological importance.

73. River Thames, London: Pilot Whale Rescue Operation – NDTV World

Why in News?

Recently, a pod of around 25 long-finned pilot whales entered the River Thames in England. The Port of London Authority and British Divers Marine Life Rescue coordinated a six-hour operation to guide them towards the North Sea. Nearly all reached safer waters, but two whales died.



Location and Key Features

- **River Thames:** Flows through southern England, including London, before entering the North Sea through the Thames Estuary.
- **Species:** Long-finned pilot whale (Globicephala melas), a highly social marine mammal found mainly in cooler temperate waters.
- **Habitat:** Usually inhabits offshore waters; its presence in the Thames was unusual.
- **Rescue agencies:** British Divers Marine Life Rescue and the Port of London Authority coordinated the response.

Ecological Significance

- **Stranding risks:** Shallow waters, changing tides, vessel traffic and human disturbance can endanger whales.
- **Conservation:** Pilot whales are cetaceans—marine mammals that include whales, dolphins and porpoises.
- **Scientific importance:** Post-mortem examinations can help determine health conditions and improve understanding of stranding events.

VISHNU IAS

SPECIES IN NEWS

74. Guru's Baaz: Punjab's State Bird – Indian Express

Why in News?

Recently, Punjab's state bird, the Northern Goshawk, became a subject of political debate, highlighting concerns about its rarity and conservation status.

Key Facts



- **Common name:** Baaz or Baaj; associated with Guru Gobind Singh in Sikh tradition.
- **Scientific name:** Astur gentilis (also known as Accipiter gentilis).
- **State bird:** Punjab designated the Northern Goshawk as its state bird.
- **Habitat:** Forests, including coniferous and mixed woodlands across parts of Europe and Asia.

Cultural and Ecological Significance

- **Sikh heritage:** The baaz symbolises courage and sovereignty and is associated with Guru Gobind Singh, known in tradition as Baazan Wale Guru.
- **Ecological role:** This bird of prey helps regulate populations of smaller birds and mammals.
- **Conservation concerns:** Habitat loss, poaching and illegal trade may threaten local populations; reports of limited recent sightings in Punjab have raised concern.

Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern (global assessment).
- **CITES:** Listed in Appendix II, regulating international trade.
- **Important distinction:** A species may be globally classified as Least Concern while remaining rare or difficult to find in a particular region.

75. Project Cheetah: Four Years of Cheetah Reintroduction in India – The Print

Why in News?



- Recently, Project Cheetah marked four years since its launch, highlighting progress in reintroducing cheetahs and establishing a breeding population in India.
- The latest official update reported 60 cheetahs, including 41 born in India, following new births at Kuno National Park.

Key Features

- **Launch:** 17 September 2022, at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
- **International cooperation:** Cheetahs were brought from Namibia, South Africa and Botswana.
- **Objective:** Establish a viable, free-ranging cheetah population and restore grassland ecosystems.
- **Milestone:** Indian-born cheetahs have begun reproducing, indicating progress towards a locally established population.

Species Profile and Conservation Status

- **Scientific name:** Acinonyx jubatus.
- **Habitat:** Open grasslands and savanna ecosystems.
- **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable.
- **CITES:** Appendix I.
- **Historical fact:** The cheetah was declared extinct in India in 1952; Project Cheetah aims to restore its ecological presence.

76. Gegeneophis chandgadi: New Legless Amphibian from the Western Ghats – Down To Earth

Why in News?

Recently, researchers discovered a new subterranean amphibian species in a village backyard at Buzawade, Chandgad taluka, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) announced the discovery.



Key Features

- **Scientific name:** Gegeneophis chandgadi.
- **Common group:** Caecilians — limbless amphibians that spend most of their lives underground and resemble earthworms or blind snakes.
- **Distinctive features:** Cylindrical, ringed body; adults measure approximately 105–185 mm in length.
- **Naming:** Named after the local Chandgadi dialect of Marathi, recognising the region's cultural identity.
- **Discovery:** Found beneath decaying logs, bamboo leaf litter and organic material in a residential landscape.

Ecological Significance

- Demonstrates that unexplored biodiversity can persist beyond formally protected forests, including agricultural and residential areas.
- The Western Ghats are a global biodiversity hotspot with high amphibian endemism.
- India has recorded 458 amphibian species, including 41 caecilian species; 11 of the 12 known Gegeneophis species are endemic to the Western Ghats.

Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Data Deficient has been recommended because its distribution and population remain insufficiently known.
- **Major concern:** Habitat disturbance and excessive pesticide use may threaten subterranean amphibians.

77. World Rhino Day: India Strengthens Greater One-Horned Rhino Conservation – PM India

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated World Rhino Day and announced the initiation of Project Rhino, aimed at strengthening conservation across rhino-bearing states.



Key Conservation Highlights

- **Assam:** Holds nearly 80% of the world's greater one-horned rhinoceros population, with Kaziranga National Park a major stronghold.
- **Other states:** Rhinos are found in Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal; reintroduction efforts at Dudhwa National Park are significant.
- **Project Rhino:** Provides financial and technical support for habitat management, genetic improvement, protection and population monitoring.
- **World Rhino Day:** Observed annually on 22 September to raise awareness about rhino conservation.

Species Profile

- **Scientific name:** Rhinoceros unicornis.
- **Habitat:** Alluvial grasslands, floodplain wetlands and riverine forests.
- **Ecological role:** Helps shape grassland vegetation and supports ecosystem functioning.
- **Major threats:** Poaching for horns, habitat loss, floods and human–wildlife conflict.

Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable.
- **CITES:** Appendix I.
- **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I protection in India.

78. Ingerana aizawl: New Frog Species Discovered in Mizoram – United News of India

Why in News?

Recently, researchers identified Ingerana aizawl as a new frog species from Hratdawng Stream on the Mizoram University campus in Aizawl. The findings were published in the scientific journal Zootaxa.



Key Features

- **Location:** Hratdawng Stream, around 15 km from central Aizawl, Mizoram.
- **Researchers:** A team led by Professor Hmar Tlawngte Lalremsanga, with researchers from Mizoram University, Cotton University and conservation organisation Help Earth.
- **Identification:** Researchers combined physical characteristics with mitochondrial 16S rRNA DNA analysis to distinguish the frog from related species.
- **Distinctive features:** Small, stout body with wrinkled back; adult males measure approximately 22–25.5 mm.
- **Naming:** The species is named after Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram.

Ecological Significance

- **Habitat:** Moist stream margins, wet rocks, leaf litter and rock crevices.
- **Biodiversity:** Highlights the potential for new species discoveries even in university campuses and urban green spaces.
- **Regional importance:** Mizoram lies within the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, known for high species diversity and endemism.

Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** A separate assessment has not yet been established for Ingerana aizawl.
- **Conservation concern:** Its distribution, population size and habitat requirements need further study.

79. DRI Seizures Highlight Illegal Wildlife Trade in India - PIB

Why in News?

Recently, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) conducted six pan-India operations, seizing protected wildlife and animal derivatives and arresting 13 persons.

Key Findings

- **Seizures**: Two leopard pelts, 180 live Indian star tortoises, 12 live tokay geckos, around 24 kg of pangolin scales and 500 g of tiger bones.
- **Locations:** Operations covered multiple states, including Odisha, Assam and Meghalaya.
- **Wildlife protection:** The seizures were made under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972; leopard and tokay gecko are listed in Schedule I.

Species in Focus







- **Leopard (Panthera pardus) and tiger (Panthera tigris):** Large carnivores; their skins and body parts are targeted by illegal wildlife markets.
- **Indian star tortoise (Geochelone elegans):** Recognisable by star-like yellow markings on its shell; threatened by the illegal pet trade.
- **Tokay gecko (Gekko gecko):** A large Asian gecko trafficked for perceived medicinal uses and the exotic-pet trade.
- **Pangolins:** Scales are trafficked for traditional-medicine markets; pangolins are protected under Indian wildlife law.

Conservation Status

- The seized species and derivatives are subject to legal protection and trade controls under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and, where applicable, CITES.

80. Badri Cattle: Indigenous Breed Conservation Through OPU-IVF Technology – Hindustan Times

Why in News?

Recently, a healthy female Badri calf was born through Ovum Pick-Up and In Vitro Fertilisation (OPU-IVF) at the Academic Dairy Farm of G. B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand.

Key Features

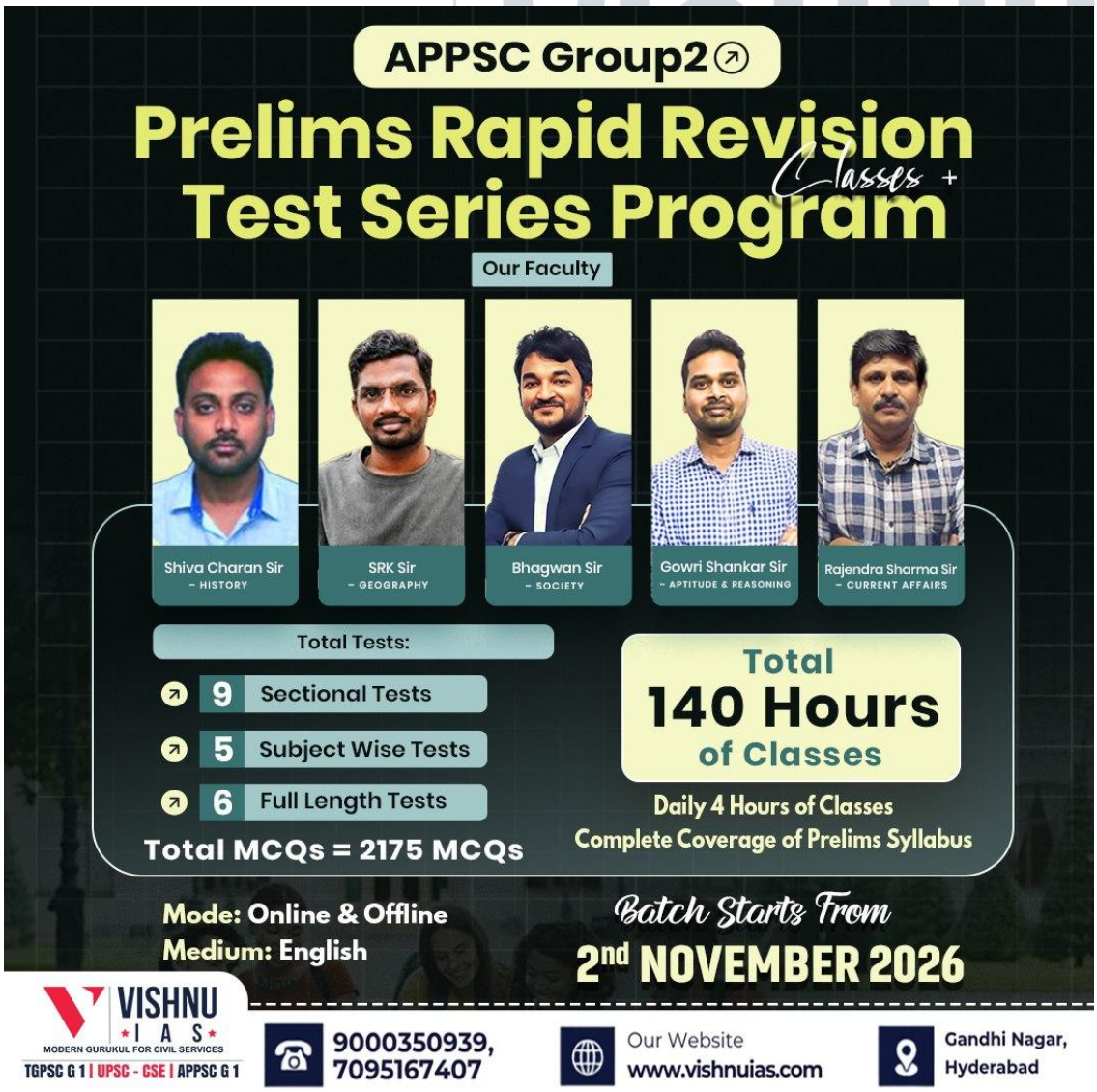
- **Breed:** Badri is an indigenous cattle breed of Uttarakhand and the state animal of the state.

- **Technology:** Oocytes from genetically superior Badri cows were fertilised in a laboratory using semen from a superior Badri bull.
- **Embryo transfer:** The Badri embryo was transferred into a Sahiwal cow, which delivered the calf.
- **Institutions:** The initiative was undertaken jointly by ICAR–National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal, and G. B. Pant University, with support from the Uttarakhand Biotechnology Council.



Significance

- **Genetic conservation:** Enables faster multiplication of valuable indigenous cattle germplasm.
- **Livelihoods:** Can support livestock productivity and sustainable animal husbandry in the Himalayan region.
- **Further research:** Scientists are also exploring cloning to multiply genetically superior Badri cattle.



Telangana Current Affairs

81. Telangana's Per-Capita Income: Growth and Inclusive Development – TG State portal

Why in News?

Recently, during Praja Palana Dinotsavam, the Chief Minister cited Telangana's per-capita income at ₹4,18,931, approximately 91% above the national average.

Economic Significance

- **Indicator:** Per-capita income represents average income per person and provides a broad measure of economic prosperity.
- **Growth drivers:** IT and other services, industrial activity, investment and urbanisation, particularly around Hyderabad.
- **Development context:** Telangana's economic performance creates opportunities for employment, infrastructure expansion and improved living standards.

Challenges

- **Regional disparities:** Hyderabad-led growth may not translate into equal prosperity across rural and less-developed districts.
- **Income inequality:** Average income does not reveal how income is distributed among households.
- **Employment quality:** High income levels must be accompanied by productive jobs, skill development and secure livelihoods.
- **Sectoral imbalance:** Agriculture and informal-sector workers may not benefit equally from services-led growth.

Way Forward

- Promote district-level industrialisation and rural enterprises.
- Strengthen agriculture, MSMEs, skill development and labour-intensive sectors.
- Improve access to education, healthcare and social protection.
- Track district-wise income, employment and poverty indicators to assess inclusive growth.

82. Telangana's GST Collections Rise 18% in September 2026 – Deccan Chronicle

Why in News?

Telangana recorded GST collections of ₹5,327 crore in September 2026, an 18% year-on-year increase from ₹4,512 crore in September 2025. The report was published on 1 October 2026.

Economic Significance

- **Revenue mobilisation:** Higher GST collections can strengthen the State's own-tax revenue and support expenditure on infrastructure, welfare and public services.
- **Economic activity:** Growth may indicate increased taxable transactions, consumption and improved tax compliance.
- **State economy:** Hyderabad's IT and services sectors, industrial activity and commercial networks contribute to Telangana's economic base. However, the specific drivers of September's growth require further evidence.

- **Fiscal autonomy:** Stronger tax revenues can improve the State's capacity to finance development, although actual fiscal health also depends on expenditure, debt and other revenue sources.

Key Concepts

- GST is a destination-based indirect tax introduced on 1 July 2017.
- CGST: Central tax on intra-State supplies; SGST: State tax on intra-State supplies; IGST: Tax on inter-State supplies and imports.
- The GST Council, constituted under Article 279A, recommends key GST-related measures.

Challenges

- Revenue fluctuations due to changing consumption and business cycles.
- Uneven distribution of economic activity across districts.
- Tax evasion and compliance gaps among businesses.

Way Forward

- Strengthen data-driven tax administration and e-invoicing compliance.
- Expand the formal tax base while supporting MSMEs.
- Promote balanced economic growth beyond Hyderabad.

83. El Niño and Telangana's Drought Concerns – Telangana Today

Why in News?

On 18 September 2026, the Telangana Legislative Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution seeking a ₹20,000-crore Central assistance package to address rainfall deficits, agricultural distress and drought-related challenges.

Key Impacts

- **Rainfall deficit:** August recorded a 38% rainfall deficit, intensifying concerns over agricultural and water security.
- **Agriculture:** Kharif cultivation declined to 123.74 lakh acres from 139.29 lakh acres in the previous year, while paddy cultivation fell by approximately 18%.
- **Water security:** Low reservoir and tank storage threatens irrigation, drinking-water availability and livestock livelihoods.
- **Power and employment:** Increased irrigation demand and crop losses can intensify electricity requirements and rural livelihood distress.

Assembly Resolution

- Sought ₹20,000 crore for drought mitigation, drinking water and irrigation.
- Requested 50 additional employment days beyond the existing 125 days under the employment scheme cited in the resolution.
- Sought crop-loss assistance, fertiliser supplies, additional electricity and restoration of water resources.
- Requested an increase in the FY 2026–27 borrowing limit from 3% to 3.5% of GSDP.

Way Forward

- Promote drought-resistant crops, micro-irrigation and watershed development.
- Restore tanks, recharge groundwater and strengthen crop insurance.
- Improve early-warning systems and Centre–State coordination.

84. Telangana's Unified Water-Security Model – Times of India

Why in News?

Telangana presented its integrated water-security model at the Departmental Summit on Water organised by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti in New Delhi on 1–2 September 2026.

Key Features

- **Unified planning:** One water-security plan, a designated lead agency, accountable financing and measurable outcomes.
- **Digital monitoring:** A comprehensive, geotagged water-asset register identifying each asset's location, funding source, implementing agency and intended benefits.
- **Tank restoration:** Telangana has nearly 44,000 minor irrigation sources, of which approximately 28,000 tanks have reportedly been mapped, geotagged and restored.
- **Conservation outcomes:** These interventions reportedly stabilised irrigation across 25.7 lakh acres and recovered approximately 9.7 TMC of storage capacity. Water-conservation structures increased from 5.61 lakh to 15.88 lakh.

Significance

- **Agriculture:** Improves irrigation reliability and supports farmers' livelihoods.
- **Governance:** Strengthens transparency, interdepartmental coordination and outcome-based monitoring.
- **Sustainability:** Supports rainwater harvesting, local water storage and climate resilience.
- **Rural development:** Complements the Catch the Rain campaign and efforts to sustain rural drinking-water supplies.

Challenges and Way Forward

- Ensure regular desilting, maintenance, groundwater recharge and equitable water distribution.
- Integrate surface-water management with aquifer monitoring and community participation.

85. Yadadri Thermal Power Plant: Coal Supply and Energy Security – Times of India

Why in News?

A Telangana government review in September 2026 highlighted the need for suitable G-9 grade coal for the Yadadri Thermal Power Plant and the additional transportation costs of sourcing coal from outside the State.

Key Issues

- **Coal quality:** G-9 is a non-coking coal grade classified by gross calorific value (GCV). Matching coal quality with boiler specifications is essential for efficient power generation.

- **Logistics burden:** Long-distance coal transportation increases freight expenditure, supply-chain dependence and the risk of delays.
- **Power-sector finances:** Higher fuel and transport costs can raise generation expenses and place pressure on electricity utilities and State finances.
- **Energy security:** Reliable fuel supplies are essential to meet Telangana's electricity demand from households, agriculture and industry.

Significance for Telangana

- **Economic growth:** Dependable electricity supports industrial investment, commercial activity and agricultural operations.
- **Infrastructure planning:** Efficient coal procurement, transport coordination and inventory management can improve plant reliability.
- **Environmental concerns:** Coal-based generation contributes to greenhouse-gas emissions, air pollution and fly-ash management challenges.

Way Forward

- Secure long-term coal-supply arrangements and optimise rail-based transportation.
- Improve plant efficiency, fuel monitoring and inventory planning.
- Complement thermal power with solar, wind, storage and other cleaner energy sources.

86. PMAY-G: Rural Housing Expansion in Telangana – Times of India

Why in News?

On 18 September 2026, the Union Rural Development Minister announced the release of the first instalment for constructing 2 lakh rural houses in Telangana, highlighting renewed efforts to strengthen rural housing security.

Key Features of PMAY-G

- **Launch:** 2016; implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- **Objective:** Provide pucca houses with basic amenities to eligible rural households that are houseless or living in inadequate housing.
- **Beneficiary identification:** Based on prescribed deprivation and eligibility criteria, subject to applicable verification and inclusion procedures.
- **Financial assistance:** Generally ₹1.20 lakh per unit in plain areas and ₹1.30 lakh in specified hilly and difficult areas, with applicable Centre–State cost-sharing arrangements.
- **Convergence:** Supports linkages with sanitation, LPG, electricity, drinking water and wage employment through relevant government programmes.

Significance for Telangana

- **Social justice:** Improves housing security and dignity for vulnerable rural families.
- **Rural economy:** Generates construction employment and demand for local materials and services.
- **Inclusive development:** Supports better living conditions and reduces housing deprivation.

Challenges and Way Forward

- Address beneficiary exclusion, land constraints, construction-cost inflation and delays in fund transfers.
- Strengthen transparent beneficiary verification, geo-tagged monitoring, quality checks and timely instalments.

87. Bhu Bharati and Digital Land Governance in Telangana – TG State portal

Why in News?

Telangana's Praja Palana Dinotsavam address on 17 September 2026 highlighted land-administration reforms, including Bhu Bharati, Bhu Dhar and AI-based Bhu Mithra services.

Key Initiatives

- **Bhu Bharati:** Telangana's land-records and registration framework, established under the Telangana Bhu Bharati (Record of Rights in Land) Act, 2025, aims to improve land-record management and grievance redressal.
- **Bhu Dhar:** Highlighted as part of the State's land-administration initiatives; its precise functions should be verified against official documentation.
- **Bhu Mithra:** The reported AI-based service represents the use of emerging technology to improve citizen access to land-related information and services.

Significance

- **Transparency:** Digitised records can improve traceability and reduce administrative discretion.
- **Farmers' welfare:** More accessible records can facilitate land transactions and access to eligible institutional benefits.
- **Dispute resolution:** Updated records and accessible grievance mechanisms can help address land-record discrepancies.
- **Ease of governance:** Technology can reduce delays, paperwork and repeated visits to revenue offices.

Challenges and Way Forward

- Address inaccurate legacy records, disputed ownership, data privacy and digital exclusion.
- Combine digitisation with field verification, legal safeguards, assisted service centres and time-bound grievance redressal.

88. Telangana's Crop-Loan Waiver and Rythu Bharosa – TG State Portal

Why in News?

Telangana's Praja Palana Dinotsavam address on 17 September 2026 highlighted farmer-welfare expenditure, crop-loan waivers and agricultural assistance, underscoring the State's focus on farm-income support.

Key Initiatives:

- **Crop-Loan Waiver**
  - **Maximum benefit:** Waiver of eligible crop loans up to ₹2 lakh per farmer family, including principal and interest.

    - **Eligible loans:** Short-term crop loans obtained between 12 December 2018 and 9 December 2023 from eligible scheduled commercial, rural and district cooperative banks.
    - **Implementation:** Governed by G.O. Rt. No. 567, dated 15 July 2024; beneficiary verification and grievance redressal mechanisms support implementation.
    - **Reported achievement:** The State Government reported waiving ₹20,677 crore in agricultural loans for 25.35 lakh farmers in its June 2026 announcement.

- **Rythu Bharosa**
    - **Objective:** Provides direct investment assistance to eligible farmers to meet cultivation expenses and support agricultural productivity.
    - **Financial assistance:** ₹12,000 per acre annually, generally disbursed in two seasonal instalments of ₹6,000 per acre.
    - **Implementation:** Funds are transferred directly to beneficiaries' bank accounts to support timely access to agricultural working capital.
    - **Reported achievement:** In June 2026, the State launched a disbursement phase, releasing ₹2,482.02 crore initially to benefit 41.37 lakh farmers and announcing a total release of ₹9,000 crore over nine days.
- **Agricultural support:** Complements broader interventions aimed at improving farm livelihoods and rural economic security.

Significance

- **Farm income:** Investment assistance can help farmers manage seasonal cultivation costs.
- **Rural economy:** Debt relief and agricultural spending can support rural consumption and local economic activity.
- **Financial inclusion:** Loan waivers can help eligible borrowers regain creditworthiness, subject to lending institutions' procedures.
- **Social protection:** Provides short-term relief to indebted farmers facing crop losses, price volatility and rising input costs.

Challenges

- Recurring indebtedness, tenant-farmer exclusion and uneven access to formal credit can limit effectiveness.
- Large fiscal commitments may constrain spending on irrigation, research and agricultural infrastructure.

Way Forward

- Strengthen transparent beneficiary verification, timely payments and tenant-farmer coverage.
- Complement welfare support with irrigation, crop diversification, market access, insurance and sustainable farming.

89. Telangana's Women's Self-Help Groups: Financial Inclusion and Economic Empowerment – TG State Portal

Why in News?

On 17 September 2026, the Telangana government highlighted bank linkages worth ₹60,487 crore and interest support of ₹1,900 crore for 4.54 lakh women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Key Initiatives

- **Bank linkages:** Connect SHGs with institutional credit to support savings, entrepreneurship and livelihood activities.
- **Interest support:** Reduces borrowing costs and improves access to affordable credit.
- **Indira Mahila Shakti:** Promotes women-led enterprises and aims to make women economically self-reliant.
- **Income generation:** Women's marts, petrol pumps and RTC rental buses create opportunities beyond traditional livelihood activities.

Significance

- **Economic empowerment:** Enhances women's income, financial independence and decision-making power.
- **Rural development:** Supports micro-enterprises, local employment and livelihood diversification.
- **Financial inclusion:** Strengthens access to formal banking and reduces dependence on informal lenders.
- **Social transformation:** Encourages collective leadership, entrepreneurship and participation in local governance.

Challenges

- Limited market access, business skills, digital literacy and enterprise sustainability can constrain SHG growth.
- Credit expansion must be matched by repayment capacity and viable business opportunities.

Way Forward

- Strengthen skill development, digital payments, branding, market linkages and professional management.
- Expand access to affordable credit, mentoring and public procurement opportunities.

90. Telangana Praja Palana Dinotsavam 2026: Welfare and Inclusive Development – TG State portal

Why in News?

Telangana observed Praja Palana Dinotsavam on 17 September 2026. The Chief Minister highlighted welfare delivery, social justice and the vision of building a modern Telangana. 17 September 1948 marks the integration of Hyderabad State into the Indian Union.

Key Highlights

- **Agriculture:** ₹2 lakh crop-loan waiver benefited 25.35 lakh farmer families; Rythu Bharosa supports farm investment.
- **Women's Empowerment:** Mahalakshmi free bus travel, Gruha Jyothi and financial support to women's Self-Help Groups promote economic independence.
- **Housing and Social Security:** Indiramma housing, ration benefits and social-security pensions target vulnerable households.

- **Education and Healthcare:** Young India Integrated Residential Schools, Skills University and enhanced Rajiv Aarogyasri coverage strengthen human development.
- **Economic Growth:** Telangana's reported per-capita income reached ₹4,18,931. Telangana Rising 2047 aims to build a $3 trillion economy.
- **Infrastructure:** Bharat Future City, Metro expansion and Musi rejuvenation feature in the State's development agenda.

Significance and Challenges

- Significance: Strengthens welfare-oriented governance, financial inclusion, human capital and regional development.
- Challenges: Fiscal sustainability, equitable access, quality of public services, employment generation and effective implementation.

Way Forward

- Link welfare spending with measurable outcomes, transparent beneficiary selection, social audits and sustainable job creation.



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