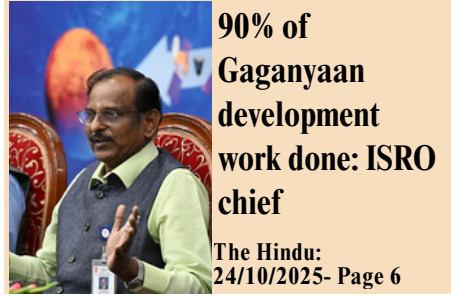


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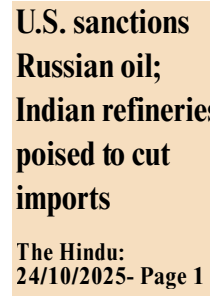
Malnutrition to have 'generational' impact on newborns in Gaza: UN
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Aland voter fraud: SIT identifies six suspects
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Literacy helped Kerala lead in development indices: Murmu



President Droupadi Murmu praised Kerala as a model for the country in terms of literacy and education. The power of literacy and knowledge has enabled Kerala to rank among the leading States on several human development indicators, President Droupadi Murmu said on Thursday. Addressing the valedictory function of the platinum jubilee celebrations of St. Thomas College at Pala in Kerala, the President emphasised that knowledge drives innovation, propels society forward, and fosters self-reliance. Noting that St. Thomas College was established with the objective of providing education primarily to students from rural areas, she said the institution has fulfilled this mission for 75 years, promoting intellectual pursuits guided by a moral compass. Speaking about Kottayam, she highlighted the region's rich legacy of social and educational transformation. "This place witnessed the great movement for the eradication of untouchability, famously known as the Vaikom Satyagraha, a hundred years ago. Kottayam is rightly called 'Aksharanagari' as it has long been a fountainhead of literacy and education. The 'Sakshara Keralam' movement was strengthened by the active participation of people from this area. P.N. Panicker's remarkable initiative to promote learning through the library movement was inspired by a simple but powerful message: "read and grow", the President said.



Migrant labourers from Assam transporting the harvested GI-tagged saltwater tolerant Pokkali paddy from the Pizhala island near Kochi. Pokkali is a unique saline tolerant rice variety that is cultivated using extensive aquaculture in an organic way in the water-logged coastal regions of Kerala.



Even as an active northeast monsoon and associated weather systems continue to impact rainfall across Tamil Nadu, another low pressure area brewing over the Bay of Bengal is likely to trigger intense rainfall over the northern districts of TN from October 26. Due to this, heavy rainfall may occur in the Western Ghats region. Active Northeast monsoon has brought surplus rain to the State so far this October — 21.2 cm, which is 85% above normal rainfall.

STATE

Aland voter fraud: SIT identifies six suspects who prepared duplicate Form 7 applications

- The Special Investigation Team (SIT) in Karnataka uncovered a money trail in the Aland voter fraud case, identifying that a call centre-like firm in Kalaburagi was allegedly paid ₹80 for each of 5,994 forged Form 7 applications.
- Six suspects have been identified; five have been questioned by the SIT and their statements recorded.
- Digital devices were seized during raids, revealing evidence that the forged applications were created for voter deletion purposes.
- The SIT is yet to determine who financially sponsored the operation.
- The fraud surfaced after Congress's B.R. Patil raised the issue of large-scale forged Form 7s in February 2023, most of which were subsequently rejected during verification.
- Recent election margins in the Aland constituency have been narrow; in 2018, BJP's Mr. Guttedar won by just 697 votes, but lost in 2023 to Mr. Patil by 10,347 votes.
- The SIT was formed after a September 2025 report in The Hindu and intervention by Rahul Gandhi raised public attention, prompting the state to act.
- Evidence indicates nearly all forged applications were rejected, as out of 6,018 Form 7s submitted, 5,994 were found to be duplicates.
- The probe highlights weaknesses in voter list management and underscores ongoing concerns about electoral fraud and political interference in local elections.
- Form 7 is an application used to request the deletion of a name from the electoral roll or to object to the inclusion of another person's name. The deletion may be requested for various reasons, such as the voter's death or relocation.

The application requires:

- **Applicant's details:** Name, Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) number, and mobile number.
- **Details of the entry to be deleted:** The name and EPIC number of the person whose entry needs to be deleted.
- **Reason for deletion:** A clear reason for the objection or deletion, such as death, shifting, or ineligibility.
- **Declaration:** A signed declaration stating that the information provided is true. False information is punishable under Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Bombay HC sets up panel to protect Sanjay Gandhi park from encroachments

- The Bombay High Court has formed a high-powered committee chaired by former Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Dilip Babasaheb Bhosale to protect Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) from ongoing encroachment threats, citing nearly 30 years of government failure to implement prior directives.
- A Division Bench, while hearing a contempt petition and PIL regarding the park's protection, highlighted that despite repeated judicial interventions and multiple orders since the late 1990s, only 49 km of the required 154 km boundary wall has been constructed, allowing further encroachments.
- SGNP covers 104 sq.km across Mumbai and Thane, includes the Kanheri Caves, supports leopards and other wildlife, and plays a vital role as Mumbai's "green lung" by absorbing carbon emissions and replenishing groundwater.
- The panel is tasked with accelerating boundary wall completion, ensuring compliance with orders, identifying land ownership and illegal occupants, and recommending removal measures for illegal structures adverse to the park's ecosystem.
- The committee comprises Justice Bhosale, Maharashtra Chief Secretary Nitin Kareer, a former Director General of Police, Conservator of Forests, and the SGNP Director, and is empowered to address legal and administrative challenges related to the park's protection.
- The matter is scheduled for the next hearing on February 19, 2026, with expectations for the panel to submit compliance updates and specific recommendations to the court.
- In the early days, the park was known as Krishnagiri National Park. However, in 1974 the name of this park was changed to 'Borivali National Park' and in 1981 to 'Sanjay Gandhi National Park' to pay tribute to late Indian leader Sanjay Gandhi.
- Besides, the park also has two artificial lakes, namely Tulsi Lake and Vihar Lake. The two lakes together supply a significant amount of water to South Mumbai.



U.S. sanctions Russian oil; Indian refineries poised to cut imports

- The U.S. has imposed sanctions on Russia's two largest oil companies, Rosneft and Lukoil, for allegedly funding the Kremlin's war efforts in Ukraine, which has resulted in a 3% increase in global oil prices.
- President Donald Trump announced that India has committed to dramatically reduce its Russian oil imports to "almost nothing" by the end of the year, aligning with the new Western sanctions and U.S. policy expectations.
- Indian refineries, particularly Reliance Industries—which has been a significant buyer of Russian crude—are actively preparing to scale back purchases in compliance with these sanctions, while also aiming to buy non-Russian oil from the spot market and other global intermediaries.
- U.S. authorities are pressuring international oil buyers, including China and India, to cease transactions with sanctioned Russian energy companies, threatening secondary sanctions to enforce compliance.
- Despite a dip in Russia's share of India's crude imports after sanctions, data shows Russian oil still accounted for over 31% of India's supply through August 2025, with India's oil importers now 'recalibrating' to realign with new U.S. and allied guidelines.
- Trump praised India's cooperation and noted direct communication with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling Indian compliance "great" and expressing confidence that the global community would also join in isolating Russian oil by ending purchases from sanctioned entities.
- Switching to oil from the Middle East, the U.S., or Brazil is expected to raise India's crude import bill, as Russian oil has been available at deep discounts compared to international market prices.
- Higher oil prices globally (already up 3%) may result from tighter supplies, further increasing inflation and pressure on India's current account and fiscal deficit.
- There is a risk of secondary sanctions for any Indian entity transacting with Russian oil giants, increasing compliance burden and potentially complicating financial transactions for Indian banks and refiners.

DCGI brings in stricter norms for tracking supply chain of high-risk solvents

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has mandated the use of a digital monitoring system on the Online National Drugs Licensing System (ONDLs) to track the supply chain of high-risk solvents, prompted by recent child deaths due to cough syrup contamination with diethylene glycol (DEG) in Madhya Pradesh.
- DEG is a highly toxic substance commonly used in industrial processes, and its contamination in pharmaceutical products has led to fatal outcomes; thus, stricter oversight has been prioritized for high-risk solvents like Propylene Glycol.
- The new norms require manufacturers to obtain manufacturing and sales licenses and other authorizations through the ONDLs portal, where all supply chain activities for these solvents must be digitally recorded and monitored.
- As per the latest directive, manufacturers must only use pharma-grade solvents and the digital system will ensure that their procurement and usage in drug production remain traceable and compliant.
- The stricter norms aim to prevent future tragedies caused by toxic solvent contamination by enhancing regulatory transparency, accountability, and traceability in the drug supply chain.
- The deaths have significantly undermined trust in India's pharmaceutical industry, which is globally known as a major supplier of generic medicines. Both domestic consumers and international buyers may become more cautious, affecting demand and the industry's reputation.
- Past incidents have already led to export bans and recalls by several countries. With the WHO and other international agencies monitoring the crisis, there is an increased risk of stricter international scrutiny, more export restrictions, and potential loss of key foreign markets for Indian pharmaceutical companies.
- As exports constitute a significant portion of the Indian pharma sector's revenues, the fallout from these incidents could translate into economic losses, factory shutdowns, and job cuts if global buyers turn away or impose bans.



Tri-services to get systems, platforms for 79,000 cr.

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, approved capital acquisition proposals worth ₹79,000 crore for strengthening the operational capabilities of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- The acquisitions aim to enhance lethality, mobility, and intelligence-gathering, and span a wide range of platforms and systems across the three services.
- For the Army, approvals include tracked Nag Missile System (NAMIS), ground-based mobile ELINT System (GBMES), and high-mobility vehicles with material handling cranes, improving anti-armour, intelligence, and logistics capabilities.
- The Navy will receive landing platform docks (LPDs), advanced lightweight torpedoes (ALWTs), electro-optical infrared search-and-track systems, smart ammunition, and 30 mm rapid gun mounts, enhancing amphibious and joint operations capabilities.
- For the Air Force, approvals cover long-range target saturation/destruction systems, data link and communication upgrades, advanced take-off/landing aids, and target engagement systems, supporting expanded long-range strike and surveillance functions.
- The acquisitions reflect a push for indigenization and self-reliance under the “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” policy, with technologies like ALWTs developed by DRDO’s Naval Science and Technological Laboratory.
- The platforms are also intended to support humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping in addition to warfighting roles, highlighting a comprehensive capability enhancement approach.



90% of Gaganyaan development work done: ISRO chief

- ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan announced that about 90% of the development work for the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission has been completed, including critical technological advancements like human-rating of rockets, life support systems, and crew-centric products.
- The Gaganyaan project aims to demonstrate India's human spaceflight capability by launching a three-member crew into a 400 km orbit for three days, followed by a safe return and landing in the Indian Sea.
- The much-anticipated crewed space mission is now expected to occur in 2027, with ISRO planning to conduct three uncrewed test missions beforehand.
- ISRO hopes to launch the first uncrewed test mission by the end of this year, as part of preparations for the main mission by 2027.
- Alongside Gaganyaan, Narayanan provided an update on the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite, which launched on July 30, 2025, and will deliver preliminary data within 10-15 days after checking satellite health.
- NISAR is the first satellite with a dual-frequency synthetic aperture radar, combining U.S. and Indian technologies to enhance earth observation for various applications.
- As part of Gaganyaan program, two unmanned missions and one manned mission are approved by the Government of India.
- The first manned spaceflight is expected to take place before 2026. The success of the Gaganyaan Mission will put India in the elite group of nations (US, Russia, and China) having human space flight capability.
- Conduct Experiments: As part of the mission, Gaganyaan also encourages and supports micro-gravity experiments.

Technical Features of NISAR: Dual-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR):

- L-band SAR (by NASA): Penetrates forest canopy, ice, and soil, useful for biomass and deformation studies.
- S-band SAR (by ISRO): Better for monitoring crops, wetlands, and other surface-level features.
- Launch Vehicle: Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark II (GSLV Mk II) (specifically the GSLV-F16 variant), India's largest rocket, is an expendable three-stage launch vehicle.
- The NISAR mission marks the first time ISRO is using a GSLV to place a satellite in sun-synchronous polar orbit.

EDITORIAL

Should India take global leadership on climate change?

- India should assume global leadership on climate change, especially in the context of COP30 in Brazil, as traditional Western leaders are now reluctant to lead.
- An “Axis of Good” — countries including India and the EU working together on climate, despite U.S. withdrawal and reduced ambition from others, highlights the lack of direction but also potential for India to step up.
- India’s pragmatic approach: while the West may not lead, India’s domestic story and steady achievement in expanding renewables makes it a credible example, though not a glamorous leader.
- India’s huge investment needs for climate action—about \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035—and the necessity to steer capital towards adaptation and mitigation projects that also deliver co-benefits, like cheaper public goods and improved resilience.
- Adaptation must go hand-in-hand with mitigation, and that India’s track record should focus on solutions, not blame, urging for practical projects that deliver immediate benefits (such as flood protection or solar-powered cold chain storage).
- India’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for 2030 are on track, and that a National Adaptation Plan should recognize renewable energy’s role in industrial decarbonization, green hydrogen, and integration of adaptation with mainstream national policies.
- This also highlights the economic opportunities for Indian companies, citing examples like Adani and Reliance’s green investments, and calls for market-based instruments such as carbon pricing or carbon trading within India and between international partners.
- The “solution bias” where focus remains on one area (like emissions cuts) and neglects others; instead, a holistic, customized Indian model for adaptation and mitigation should be advanced internationally.
- India’s best pitch for global climate leadership is to champion innovative, scalable climate solutions (e.g., solar, electric mobility, sustainable agriculture) that offer concrete benefits for both India and developing countries.
- India should take the leadership role by focusing on implementation and constructive international cooperation—prioritizing innovation, adaptation, and co-benefit-driven policies rather than waiting for direction from traditional Western climate leaders.

The UN matters, as a symbol of possibility

- The article, written by Shashi Tharoor, reflects on the 80th anniversary of the United Nations (UN) and discusses its evolution, challenges, shortcomings, and the urgent need for reform in the context of present global realities.
- Tharoor draws from his decades-long association with the UN, recalling its successes and failures, and emphasizes that although the UN is not perfect, it remains indispensable to global governance and collective security.
- The post-World War consensus that birthed the UN has eroded, with contemporary geopolitics marked by multipolarity, new powers, weakened multilateralism, and nationalism even within democracies, leading to stagnation in global cooperation.
- The article highlights the weakening of foundational principles of the UN—sovereign equality, peaceful dispute resolution, and collective security—due to contested authority, lack of reform, and outdated structures frozen since 1945, not reflecting power realities of 2025.
- Calls for reform from populous nations like India, the G4 (Germany, Japan, Brazil, India), and Africa have increased, seeking a more representative and equitable global governance system.
- Tharoor notes India’s compelling case for an enhanced global role, citing its large population, proven peacekeeping record, commitment to democracy, and growing economic power, but laments its exclusion from the permanent Security Council membership.
- He critiques the limited influence of the UN, particularly in global security and peacemaking, due to the permanent members’ veto and the tendency to prioritize their own interests.
- The article stresses the importance of the UN’s normative influence—upholding human rights, gender equality, and sustainable development—citing the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals as a positive example.
- Tharoor calls for urgent reforms: expanding and democratizing the Security Council, ensuring the UN adapts and invests in rapid crisis response, and restoring its moral vision to prioritize universal values.
- He advocates for greater strategic autonomy for India and other rising nations, emphasizing multialignment and pragmatic, interest-based foreign policy amid global uncertainty and heightened competition among major powers.
- The need for increased investment in inclusive decision-making, embracing digital technologies, and making the UN more accountable and efficient is highlighted as a key path to strengthening its legitimacy and relevance.
- The article concludes that the UN, while imperfect and constantly evolving, is still necessary to promote dialogue over domination, and that meaningful reform and renewed commitment from member states are essential to ensure its future effectiveness and credibility.

PRELIMS CORNER :

1. Which national agency has launched “CyTrain” a portal for online training of different stakeholders in Cybercrime investigations and prosecution?

- (a) C-DAC
- (b) NITI Aayog
- (c) CERTIn
- (d) NCRB

2. Ichamati river is a transboundary river that flows through?

- (a) India and Bangladesh
- (b) India and Bhutan
- (c) India and Nepal
- (d) India and Tibet

3. ‘The Competitiveness roadmap for India@100’ sometimes seen in news recently, is released by

- (a) NITI Aayog
- (b) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- (c) Department of Economic Affairs
- (d) Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

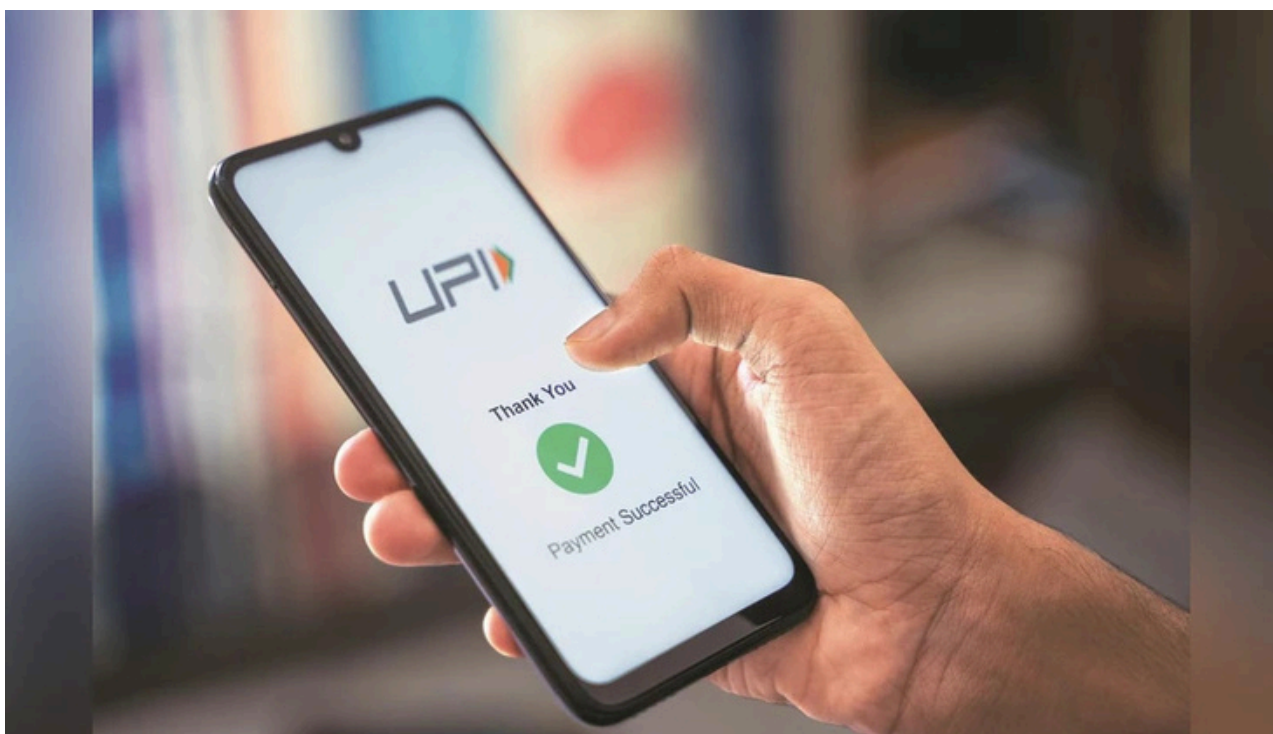
4. Coco Islands and Preparis Island are part of?

- (a) Bangladesh
- (b) Myanmar
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Thailand

DETAILED ANSWER KEY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE CHRONICLE PAGE

‘UPI leads in payment volume, RTGS value; debit card deals dip’

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that in the half year ending June 2025, payment transaction volume stood at 12,549 crore, worth ₹1,572 lakh crore, with the vast majority attributed to digital payments, particularly UPI.
- Payment volumes have surged dramatically over the past five years, from 3,248 crore in 2019 to 20,849 crore in 2024, and value increased from ₹1,175 lakh crore to ₹28,830 lakh crore, reflecting India's continued digitization of payments.
- UPI (Unified Payments Interface) dominated, accounting for approximately 96.7% of all payment transactions in the first half of 2025, with 12,187 crore UPI transactions valued at ₹246.8 lakh crore, representing strong consumer acceptance and use for small-value payments.
- NEFT (National Electronic Funds Transfer) also grew, reaching 490.5 crore transactions (worth ₹237 lakh crore) in the first half of 2025, with robust annual growth.
- RTGS (Real-Time Gross Settlement), mainly used for high-value transfers, surged as well: volume rose from 14.8 crore in 2019 to 29.5 crore in 2024, and value from ₹1,116.4 lakh crore to ₹1,398.2 lakh crore in the same period; in HY 2025, 16.1 crore transactions were processed, amounting to ₹1,079.2 lakh crore.
- Debit card transactions continued to decline, with volumes dropping from 4,985.2 crore in 2019 to 3,012.9 crore in 2024, and further to 1,276 crore in HY 2025; value fell to ₹412,468 crore in HY 2025 as consumer preference shifted to UPI and other digital modes.
- Prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) such as wallets and gift cards processed 6.9 crore transactions worth ₹1.23 lakh crore in HY 2025, showing niche but growing relevance.
- This emphasizes the structural shift in India's payment ecosystem: UPI's low average transaction size affirms its role in daily, small-value retail payments, while debit card usage is declining in both volume and value—even for offline purchases.



Malnutrition to have 'generational' impact on newborns in Gaza: UN

- A senior UN official has warned of “generational” health impacts due to severe malnutrition among newborns and pregnant women in Gaza, urging for a surge in international aid to prevent lifelong consequences.
- 70% of Gaza’s newborns are currently premature or underweight—a staggering rise from 20% before the October 2023 conflict escalation—indicating widespread acute malnutrition and critical risks to child development.
- One quarter of Gaza’s population is reported as “starving,” with about 11,500 pregnant women facing life-threatening nutritional deficiencies that critically affect both mother and child health.
- Existing public health and humanitarian infrastructure have collapsed, with medical supply shortages, destruction of clinics and facilities, and blockades hampering effective intervention and emergency care.
- Maternal and neonatal malnutrition heighten the risk of long-term cognitive and physical impairments, creating cycles of poor health and poverty extending into future generations.
- The lack of medical care has forced some pregnant women toward unsafe abortions, while 700,000 women and girls experience monthly struggles securing safe water, sanitary products, and privacy for basic hygiene.
- An additional threat cited is Gaza’s “unmapped minefield,” with unexploded ordnance likely to persist for decades, endangering children and complicating recovery and rehabilitation efforts.
- The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) is calling for urgent and large-scale humanitarian aid, warning of devastating, long-term consequences if global action is not taken quickly.

Modi to participate in ASEAN meet virtually, drops Malaysia travel plan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not travel to Kuala Lumpur for the 47th ASEAN summit (October 26-28) but will participate virtually, with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar leading the Indian delegation in person.
- No official reason was given for Modi’s decision to skip Malaysia, although it is reported he cited ongoing Deepavali celebrations; Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim publicly noted Modi’s greetings and support for Malaysia’s ASEAN chairmanship.
- The summit is notable for drawing several major international dignitaries, including U.S. President Donald Trump, and was expected to be a venue for potential face-to-face meetings between Modi and Trump amid ongoing U.S.-India trade and diplomatic tensions.
- India-U.S. ties remain uneasy: after the U.S. imposed a 50% punitive tariff on Indian goods over Russian oil purchases, both Modi and Trump have exchanged messages, but have not met in person despite multiple attempts.
- U.S. officials claim recent calls with Modi focused on trade, Russian oil, and Pakistan, while Indian sources insist the Pakistan issue was not discussed, reflecting discord over regional security narratives.
- Modi was also reportedly invited by Trump to a peace summit on Gaza’s ceasefire, but India was represented by another official, showing a lower profile in direct mediation efforts.
- Indian and U.S. sides have diverging perspectives on recent bilateral conversations, with Trump publicizing issues like Indian-American grievances and border disputes, while Indian officials focus on economic and strategic cooperation.
- India strongly supports ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific, participating actively in ASEAN-led forums like the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise.
- Security cooperation includes maritime security (especially in the South China Sea), anti-piracy operations, disaster management, and counter-terrorism, aligning with India’s SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine.

Prelims Corner: Explanations

Q1. Ans d

'CyTrain' portal: It is a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) platform, developed for capacity building of police officers/judicial officers through online courses on critical aspects of cybercrime investigation, forensics, prosecution, etc. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was established in 1986 to act as a repository of information on crime and criminals.

It was set up based on the recommendations of the Tandon Committee, the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the Task Force of the Home Ministry.

Nodal Ministry: It comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India.

Headquarters: New Delhi.

The NCRB has also launched CyTrain, a portal for online training of different stakeholders in cybercrime investigations and prosecution.

Q2. Ans a

It is a trans-boundary river which flows through India and Bangladesh. It also forms part of the boundary between the two countries.

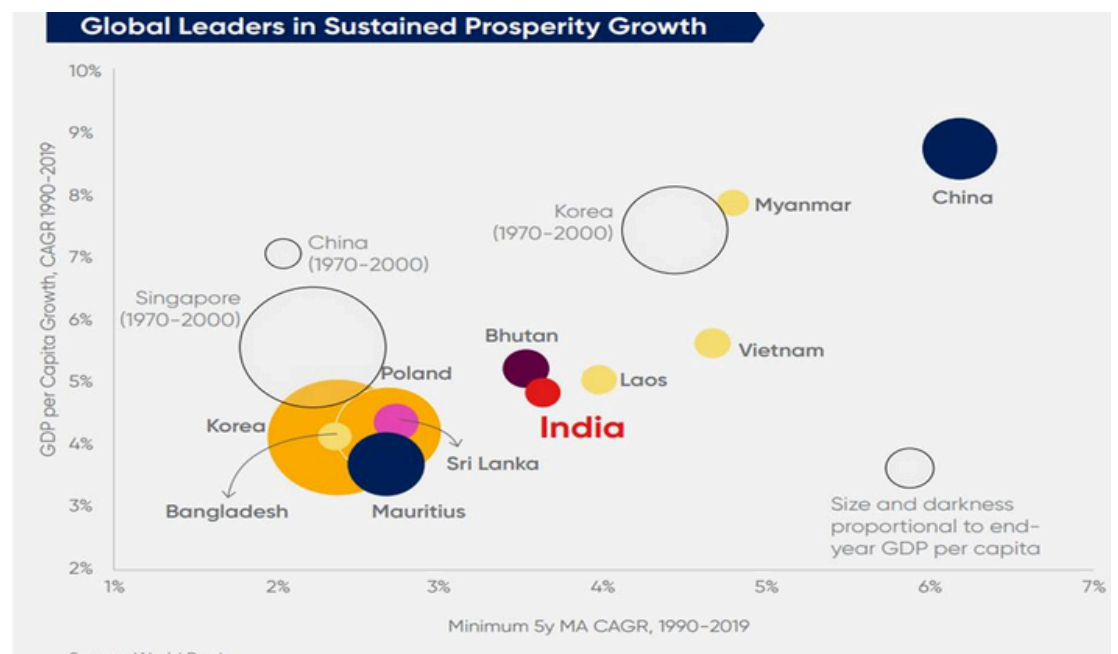
Course:

It is one of the bifurcations of the Mathabhanga River (a tributary of the Padma) and originates at Mahjdia village in the Nadia district of West Bengal. It flows through the Nadia and North 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal. Then it forms part of the India–Bangladesh international border. Later, it enters Bangladesh's Satkhira and Khulna districts. It covers a distance of around 216 km before discharging into the Kalindi River at Hasnabad in North 24 Parganas District and finally outfalls into the Bay of Bengal near Moore Island. Ichhamati River and its tributaries form a large oxbow lake complex in North 24-Paraganas district near Bangaon. The river is facing siltation leading to thin flow of water in the dry season and floods in the rainy season.



Q3. Ans d

The Competitiveness Roadmap for India@100 was released by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister (PM). The roadmap, which is a part of the India Competitiveness Initiative, is a collaborative endeavour between the EAC-PM and The Institute for Competitiveness. It envisions setting new guiding principles for the country's growth journey over the following years and guiding different states, ministries, and partners in India's growth to develop sector-specific roadmaps for achieving targeted goals.



Q4. Ans b

Coco Islands and Preparis Island are a pair of geographically close but politically distinct island groups in the Bay of Bengal that belong to Myanmar. The Coco Islands are a small cluster just south of Preparis Island and about 55 km from India's Landfall Island, while Landfall Island is the northernmost island of the Indian Andaman and Nicobar Islands archipelago. Both islands are strategically located, with recent development on the Coco Islands sparking security concerns for India.



Case Study:



The Overberg mountains stretched along the horizon, but the monitors — bundled in scarves — were focused on activity much closer: around a giant wind turbine, a small, dark silhouette had appeared. “Stop turbine 11, please. Cape vulture,” one said into a walkie-talkie. “Stopping turbine 11,” came the reply. BirdLife South Africa estimates that every year an average 4.25 birds are killed per wind turbine, most often when they fly into blades that can reach speeds of up to 280 km per hour. With more than 1,400 turbines operating across South Africa, an estimated 6,000 birds die this way a year, the group says. Ten percent are endangered species. To mitigate the impact, Excelsior Wind Farm has implemented a Shutdown on Demand Protocol that prioritises six vulnerable species, including the Cape vulture and endangered black harrier. When monitors spot one, “they inform the control room via radio and that’s when they will turn off the turbine,” said conservationist Clarissa Mars, who oversees the programme at the farm 200 km east of Cape Town. Despite the efforts, around 13 black harriers have been killed at South Africa’s more than 30 wind farms in the past decade, according to University of Cape Town professor Rob Simmons.

Autumn blooms:



Believed to have been introduced from China to Kashmir many centuries ago, chrysanthemum flowers or Gul-e-Dawood is all set to replicate the success story of tulip garden in the Valley, but, unlike tulips, the mesmerising bloom of 30 lakh flowers will spread out till harsh winters set in. Located at the foothills of the Zabarwan forest range, the well-curated garden is spread over five hectares of land. It will feature more than 50 exquisite chrysanthemum varieties and over 30 lakh blooms are expected this season.

Indian women seals semifinal spot



India couldn’t have hoped for a better way to storm into the semifinals of the Women’s ODI World Cup. Adding to the festive fervour, India thumped New Zealand by 53 runs via DLS method on Thursday to book a spot in the last-four stage after eight years as it rode on centuries by openers Pratika Rawal and Smriti Mandhana to put up a mammoth 340 for three in 49 overs. As the White Ferns put the host in on a batting-friendly surface, Smriti (109, 95b, 10x4, 4x6) and Pratika (122, 134b, 13x4, 2x6) laid the foundation with a record 212-run stand — the highest for India in World Cups.