

IYACHAMY ACADEMY UPSC PRELIMS CURRENT AFFAIRS

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES



Strategic Current Affairs for UPSC Prelims

What's Inside

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- Major Agreements and Outcomes
- Key Global Organizations (UN, G20, etc.)
- Regional Meetings & Dialogues
- International + Current Affairs Integration
- Quizzes + Analysis + Static GK Integration

Prepared by

IYACHAMY ACADEMY

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SUMMITS & CONFERENCES | CURRENT AFFAIRS

JANUARY 2025 – FEBRUARY 2026 | INDEX OF TOPICS

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SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

UN & MULTILATERAL SUMMITS

UN Environmental Summits – COP & CBD Failures

The UN's 2024 environmental summits in Colombia (biodiversity), Azerbaijan (climate), Saudi Arabia (land degradation), and South Korea (plastics) failed to deliver meaningful outcomes. This marked the fourth consecutive failure in UN environmental negotiations, with developing nations demanding increased technology transfers and financial support.

News in Brief

- Four major UN environmental summits achieved no or partial success in 2024
- Divergence between developed and developing nations on financial commitments
- Calls for technology transfer and climate finance remain unresolved
- Previous failures in biodiversity, climate change, and plastic pollution discussions

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **UNFCCC** – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted 1992 Rio Earth Summit, entered force 1994; 198 parties; Secretariat Bonn, Germany; oversees annual COP conferences for emission reduction targets.
- **COP29 Baku** – Azerbaijan (Nov 2024); agreed \$300 bn/yr Climate Finance (NCQG) for 2025-2035 vs developing nations demand of \$1.3 tn; criticized as inadequate by India and Small Island States.
- **COP16 UNCBD Cali-Rome** – Colombia (Oct-Nov 2024, resumed Feb 2025 Rome); Kunming-Montreal GBF targets; agreed \$200 bn/yr for biodiversity by 2030; Cali Fund for DSI benefit-sharing.
- **UNEP (UN Environment Programme)** – Est. 1972 Stockholm Conference, HQ Nairobi Kenya; coordinates global environmental policy; leads Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) implementation under UNCCD.
- **Basel Convention** – 1989 treaty on hazardous waste transport, 190 parties; amended 2019 to control plastic waste exports; led by Secretariat in Geneva.
- **UNEA-6 Nairobi** – UN Environment Assembly 6th session (Feb 2024); passed resolution on plastic pollution; endorsed \$20 bn/yr environmental finance target.
- **Kunming-Montreal GBF** – Adopted Dec 2022 CBD COP15, Montreal Canada; 23 targets including 30x30 (30 percent land/sea protected by 2030); binding from 2025; requires \$200 bn/yr by 2030.

Prelims Pointers

- UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change oversees COP processes
- CBD Targets under Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
- Paris Agreement Article 6 on carbon credit mechanisms
- SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) alignment

Paris AI Action Summit 2025 – India's AI Leadership

PM Narendra Modi co-chaired the AI Action Summit with France's President Emmanuel Macron in Paris. The summit brought together world leaders, policymakers, and tech experts to discuss AI governance, ethics, and societal role. Key themes: Public Interest AI, Trust in AI, and Global AI Governance.

News in Brief

- Modi highlighted India's Digital Public Infrastructure for 1.4 billion citizens
- India's AI Mission building its own Large Language Model (LLM)
- India announced hosting of next global AI Summit
- 2nd India-France AI Policy Roundtable held on sidelines

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Paris AI Action Summit** – 10-11 Feb 2025 Paris, co-chaired by France PM Gabriel Attal and India PM Modi; 3rd in series after Bletchley UK (Nov 2023) and Seoul (May 2024); 60 countries; statement on inclusive/sustainable AI.
- **India AI Mission** – Approved Mar 2024, Rs 10,371 cr (Rs 1.03 bn USD equiv) 5-year outlay; focuses on indigenous LLM development, AI infrastructure, talent; under Ministry of Electronics and IT; HQ Delhi.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** – India model: UPI (500M+ users), Aadhaar (1.4B), open APIs; leverages 1.4B+ citizens; replicable in Global South; keynote focus of Modi at Paris summit.
- **Public Interest AI** – AI for developmental outcomes: healthcare, agriculture, governance; vs commercial AI; India emphasizes benefits for grassroots application in digital inclusion.
- **Global AI Governance** – International frameworks post-EU AI Act 2024; Paris statement addresses ethics, bias, transparency; India absent from US/UK regulation-light approach (which excludes both from statement).
- **Statement on Inclusive and Sustainable AI** – Endorsed by 60 countries (excluding US, UK); commits to responsible AI development with focus on Global South access; India signatory; framework for cross-border AI governance.

Prelims Pointers

- India's AI Mission – developing indigenous Large Language Models
- Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) – Open Network concepts like UPI
- Responsible AI – ethical frameworks for technology deployment
- Next AI Summit to be hosted by India

COP16 Biodiversity & Baku-Belém Roadmap

COP16 – 16th Conference of Parties to Convention on Biological Diversity held in Rome. Countries agreed on financial roadmap to mobilize at least \$200 billion annually by 2030 for biodiversity conservation. The Baku-Belém Roadmap launched UN framework to scale climate finance, aiming to mobilize \$1.3 trillion/year by 2035.

News in Brief

- COP16 Rome: \$200 billion annually for biodiversity by 2030
- \$20 billion annually for developing countries' biodiversity programs
- Baku-Belém Roadmap: Runs from COP29 (Azerbaijan) to COP30 (Brazil)
- \$1.3 trillion annual climate finance target by 2035

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **CBD COP16** – Convention on Biological Diversity 16th Conference of Parties; held Cali Colombia (21 Oct - 1 Nov 2024), resumed Rome (25-27 Feb 2025); 195+ parties; ended \$200 bn/yr by 2030 finance agreement.
- **Kunming-Montreal GBF** – Agreed Dec 2022 Kunming China; 23 targets with 30x30 core (30 percent terrestrial/marine by 2030); Target 19: mobilize \$200 bn/yr for biodiversity conservation by 2030.
- **Cali Fund** – Launched 2024 from Digital Sequence Information (DSI) benefit-sharing; pharma/cosmetics contribute on genetic data used; 50 percent to indigenous peoples; first of its kind global fund.

- **Loss and Damage Fund** – Established COP27 (Sharm El-Sheikh 2022); for climate-vulnerable nations; \$700M pledged; operationalized COP28; managing climate impacts independent of mitigation/adaptation.
- **Nature-based Solutions** – Ecosystem protection for carbon sequestration (forests, wetlands); counted toward NDC targets; \$35B/yr needed; CBD emphasizes integration with climate finance under Article 6.
- **IPBES (Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity)** – Est. 2012, based Bonn Germany; 140+ member governments; produces Global Assessment reports on species extinction; informs CBD decisions; latest 2023 report: 1M species at extinction risk.
- **Baku-Belém Roadmap** – Named after COP29 host Azerbaijan (2024) and COP30 host Belém Brazil (2025); launched NCQG framework scaling to \$1.3 tn/yr climate finance by 2035 target.

Prelims Pointers

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) – 1992 Rio treaty for biodiversity
- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – 2022 agreed targets
- Loss and Damage Finance – new mechanism at COP27+
- Article 6 Carbon Markets – Paris Agreement mitigation mechanism

COP30 Belém, Brazil – Climate & Ocean Action

COP30 held in Belém, Brazil in November 2025. India announced hosting of Global Big Cats Summit 2026, joined Tropical Forests Forever Facility as observer. Multiple climate finance initiatives launched including Climate Investment Fund's ARISE program for developing nations.

News in Brief

- India to host Global Big Cat Summit 2026 under International Big Cat Alliance
- India released 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' climate action report
- Climate Investment Fund launched ARISE program at COP30
- Cambodia joined Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative (18th nation)

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **COP30** – 30th UNFCCC Conference of Parties, 10-21 Nov 2025 Belém Pará Brazil; first COP in Amazon region; hosted by Lula govt; Presidency: André Corrêa do Lago; focus on NDC updates and climate finance scaling.
- **IBCA (International Big Cat Alliance)** – India-led, est. 2023, HQ at NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority) Delhi; 97 range countries; Treaty signed April 2023; secures 7 big cats: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Jaguar, Puma, Cheetah; DG: S.P. Yadav; India hosting summit 2026.
- **Tropical Forests Forever Facility** – Brazil-proposed \$125 bn fund idea (COP28); rewards countries for keeping forests standing; pilot with Norway, Indonesia, DRC; India joined as observer COP30; addresses land degradation/REDD+ nexus.
- **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** – Paris Agreement Art 4; country-specific climate targets for 2025-2030 (3rd iteration); 193 signatories must submit; India targets: 500 GW renewables by 2030, 45 percent emissions intensity reduction.
- **Blue NDC Challenge** – Ocean-based climate action in NDCs; supports countries integrate marine sectors (fisheries, shipping) into climate pledges; launched COP27, expanded COP30.
- **ARISE Program** – Accelerating Resilience Investments for Sustainable Economies; launched Climate Investment Fund at COP30; targets \$5B for climate-vulnerable developing nations.

- **Article 6 Carbon Markets** – Paris Agreement mechanism for international carbon credit trading; allows countries offset emissions via other nations projects; rules finalized COP26 Glasgow 2021; COP30 focus on Article 6.4 implementation.

Prelims Pointers

- Paris Agreement Article 6 – international carbon credit trading
- Just Transition – supporting fossil fuel-dependent economies shift
- NDC Nationally Determined Contributions – country climate pledges
- REDD+ Mechanism – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation

3rd UN Ocean Conference – High Seas Treaty & Plastics

3rd UN Ocean Conference held in Nice, France. Concluded with 50 countries ratifying BBNJ Agreement (High Seas Treaty). India pledged ratification and proposed 10-point roadmap for sustainable ocean governance. Growing calls for precautionary pause on deep-sea mining.

News in Brief

- 50 countries ratified BBNJ (High Seas Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction)
- India pledged ratification of High Seas Treaty
- India proposed 10-point roadmap for sustainable ocean governance
- Precautionary pause calls on deep-sea mining activities

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **3rd UN Ocean Conference** – June 2025 Nice France; biennial meetings under Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Life Below Water); focuses marine biodiversity, fishing sustainability, plastic pollution.
- **BBNJ Agreement** – Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction; adopted 19 June 2023 UN NY; aka High Seas Treaty; covers 95 percent ocean (beyond 200nm EEZ); requires 60 ratifications to enter force; India signed 25 Sep 2024; 50+ ratified by 2025.
- **High Seas Governance** – International waters (beyond EEZ); BBNJ creates legal framework for marine protected areas (MPAs), genetic resource access, capacity-building for developing states.
- **Deep-Sea Mining Ban** – Precautionary pause on mineral extraction below 2000m; ISA (International Seabed Authority) debates; India supports moratorium; ecological impacts unknown; metallic sulfides/cobalt-rich crusts at risk.
- **Plastic Pollution Treaty** – UN Environment Program negotiating global treaty; INC-5 March 2025 Ottawa Canada; draft includes production caps, extended producer responsibility, developing-nation financial support.
- **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** – BBNJ enables high seas MPAs covering 30 percent ocean by 2030; co-managed by ISA and coastal states; India supports ambitious MPA network in Indian Ocean.
- **10-Point Roadmap (India)** – India proposal at 3rd Ocean Conference: sustainable fisheries, ocean acidification monitoring, capacity-building for island states, microplastics research, blue economy equity framework.

Prelims Pointers

- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) – 200 nautical miles coastal jurisdiction
- High Seas – international waters beyond EEZ jurisdiction
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) – designated ocean conservation zones
- UNCLOS – UN Convention on the Law of the Sea governs ocean governance
- INDIA-HOSTED SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

28th Commonwealth Speakers Conference (CSPOC) 2026

Om Birla, Lok Sabha Speaker, announced India will host the 28th CSPOC in 2026 in New Delhi. Event will focus on AI and social media in parliamentary processes. India previously hosted CSPOC in 1970-71, 1986, and 2010.

News in Brief

- India to host CSPOC 2026 in New Delhi for fourth time
- Focus on AI and social media use in parliamentary processes
- Inviting presiding officers from Commonwealth nations
- Expected participation from 53 Commonwealth member parliaments

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Commonwealth Speakers Conference** – CSPOC; biennial gathering of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments and Legislatures; 54 Commonwealth member states (1.3B population); promotes parliamentary democracy and cooperation.
- **28th CSPOC 2026** – India to host in New Delhi; Om Birla (Lok Sabha Speaker) announced; focus: AI in parliamentary processes, social media impact on legislatures, digital democracy.
- **Previous India Hosts** – India hosted CSPOC in 1970-71 (Delhi), 1986 (Delhi), 2010 (Delhi); 2026 will be 4th time; strengthens India role as Commonwealth democracy leader.
- **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association** – Est. 1911; promotes democratic governance, parliamentary traditions across Commonwealth; HQ London; supports capacity-building for legislatures in developing Commonwealth nations.
- **Commonwealth Nations History** – Post-colonial network of 54 nations (2B+ population); formerly British Empire territories; Queen Elizabeth II symbolic head (now King Charles III); decentralized structure with rotating chairs.
- **Parliamentary Digitalization** – CSPOC 2026 explores AI-powered legislative drafting, social media engagement with citizens, cybersecurity for parliament systems, remote voting technology; India digital parliament flagship topic.
- **Capacity-Building Role** – CPA supports smaller legislatures (Mauritius, Seychelles, Malta) with training, peer exchange programs, library resources; Westminster tradition standardization across member parliaments.

Prelims Pointers

- Presiding Officers – heads of legislative bodies (Speakers, Presidents of houses)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association – body facilitating inter-parliamentary exchanges
- Digital Governance – e-parliament initiatives for transparency
- Democratic Institutions – strengthening legislative processes across Commonwealth

India AI Impact Summit 2026 – Guinness Record & Global AI Leadership

India AI Impact Summit 2026 held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (Feb 19-20). India set Guinness World Record with 250,946 pledges on responsible AI usage within 24 hours. Theme: 'Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya' (Welfare for All, Happiness for All). First major global AI summit held in Global South.

News in Brief

- Guinness World Record: 2.5 lakh pledges on responsible AI usage in 24 hours
- Theme: 'Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya' (Welfare for All)

- Second largest global gathering in India after G20 Summit
- Focus on inclusive AI for People, Planet, and Progress

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **India AI Impact Summit 2026** – 19-20 Feb 2026, Bharat Mandapam New Delhi; first major global AI summit held in Global South; hosted by India under 2024-25 DeitY initiative.
- **Guinness World Record** – 250,946 pledges on responsible AI usage within 24 hours (record achieved); participants commit to ethical AI practices; largest grassroots AI ethics commitment globally.
- **Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya** – Sanskrit: Welfare for All, Happiness for All; thematic framework; reflects India philosophy of inclusive development through technology; aligns with Global South priorities on AI equity.
- **India AI Ecosystem** – 5,000+ AI startups (2023); \$13.6B AI market size; talent pool: 300,000+ AI professionals; Ministry of Electronics and IT coordinating AI Policy Framework 2021.
- **Global South Context** – AI summits historically in developed nations (Bletchley UK, Seoul Korea); Delhi 2026 marks paradigm shift to emerging market perspectives; focuses AI for development, not just innovation.
- **Responsible AI Framework** – India proposes AI Bill draft (2023-2024); balances innovation with regulation; emphasizes transparency, explainability, bias mitigation; Template for G20/BRICS consensus on AI governance.
- **Participation Scale** – Expected 10,000+ delegates from 150+ countries; includes AI researchers, policymakers, civil society, indigenous leaders; youth forum emphasizing AI careers in underdeveloped regions.

Prelims Pointers

- Ethical AI – preventing algorithmic bias and ensuring transparency
- AI for Development – leveraging AI for SDGs and social good
- Governance – regulatory frameworks for responsible AI
- Data Privacy – protecting personal information in AI systems

Raisina Dialogue & Raisina Middle East Conference

First Raisina Middle East Conference held in Abu Dhabi, UAE (Jan 28-29, 2025). External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar was Chief Guest. Organized by Observer Research Foundation (ORF), UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and MEA. Focused on regional geopolitics, trade, and strategic partnerships.

News in Brief

- First Raisina Middle East Conference held in Abu Dhabi
- Organized by ORF in collaboration with UAE and Indian MEA
- Focus on regional geopolitics, trade partnerships, and maritime security
- Expansion of Raisina Dialogue format to Middle East region

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Raisina Middle East Conference** – 1st edition Jan 28-29 2025, Abu Dhabi UAE; organized by Observer Research Foundation (ORF) India, UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MEA India.
- **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** – Chief Guest Raisina ME 2025; focus on India-UAE strategic partnership, regional geopolitics, trade, Gulf cooperation; India-GCC bilateral expansion priority.

- **Observer Research Foundation (ORF)** – Est. 1990, New Delhi; think tank; hosts Raisina Dialogue (Delhi annual geopolitical conference, est. 2016); 300+ fellows; publishes research on Asia-Pacific strategy, security.
- **Raisina Dialogue** – Annual flagship conference Delhi on geopolitics; convenes foreign ministers, academics, media; 2025 edition Jan; India-centric perspective on great power dynamics, regional stability.
- **India-UAE Strategic Relations** – Valued at \$60B+ bilateral trade (2024); defense cooperation (UAE arms purchases); digital partnerships (Dubai, Abu Dhabi fintech hubs); cultural-religious bridge (Islam-Hinduism dialogue).
- **GCC Integration** – Gulf Cooperation Council: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman; India cultivates ties with all 6 members; oil/energy security vital for India; Raisina ME bridges Gulf-India geopolitics.
- **Think Tank Diplomacy** – ORF India-centric research; counterbalance to Western think tanks (Brookings, CSIS); influences India foreign policy narratives; Raisina Dialogue brand positioning India as great power.

Prelims Pointers

- Observer Research Foundation – Indian think tank on geopolitics
- Strategic Autonomy – India's independent foreign policy approach
- Non-Alignment 2.0 – contemporary multipolar foreign policy
- Regional Connectivity – trade and infrastructure in Asia

Vibrant Gujarat & BioAsia 2026

BioAsia 2026 – 23rd edition held in Hyderabad. Inaugurated by Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy. Focus on TechBio and fusion of AI with life sciences. Featured 3,000+ international delegates at HITECH Exhibition Centre. Showcases India's biotech and life sciences innovation.

News in Brief

- BioAsia 2026: 23rd edition in Hyderabad with 3,000+ delegates
- Focus on TechBio and AI-life sciences fusion
- Showcases Indian biotech innovation and global partnerships
- Major platform for biotech investment and collaboration

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **BioAsia 2026** – 23rd edition, Feb 2026 Hyderabad Telangana; biennale on biotech, life sciences, pharma; inaugurated by CM A. Revanth Reddy; 3,000+ international delegates at HITECH Exhibition Centre.
- **TechBio Focus** – Fusion of AI/ML with biology; drug discovery acceleration, synthetic biology, computational chemistry; investment focus at BioAsia 2026; India positioning as TechBio hub.
- **Hyderabad Biotech Cluster** – 180+ biotech companies; Rs 2,500 cr annual turnover; called India biotech capital; hosts 40 percent India biotech workforce; attracts MNC R and D centers (Syngenta, Astellas, etc.).
- **Vibrant Gujarat Summit** – Biennial investor summit Gujarat; last edition Jan 2022; showcases investment opportunities, industrial corridors; parallel to BioAsia in rotating venues (Hyderabad, Bangalore).
- **IP Framework** – India patent law protects biotech innovations; 2020 Biotech IP policy; 1,200+ biotech patents granted annually; government Rs 2,000 cr tax breaks on biotech R and D; attracting global pharma R and D centers.
- **Therapeutic Focus** – India biotech targeting oncology, immunology, rare diseases, anti-infectives (TB, malaria); ICMR partnerships; clinical trial capacity: 50,000+ per year (vs 500,000 globally); cost advantage 10x cheaper than US/EU.

- **Investment Outlook** – \$2B+ VC investment biotech 2023; exits via IPOs (Biocon, Lupin, Dr Reddy), acquisitions (Intas by Advent, Sorrento); expectation \$3-5B annual biotech investments by 2026.

Prelims Pointers

- India as biotech hub – manufacturing and R&D in pharmaceuticals
- BRICS BIMSTEC cooperation in health sciences
- Startup ecosystem – Indian biotech startups gaining global recognition
- Strategic autonomy in critical healthcare supplies

Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2026 – Cultural Heritage

39th Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2026 held in Faridabad, Haryana. Theme: 'Local to Global - The identity of Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Showcases handlooms, handicrafts, and India's cultural heritage. Jointly hosted by Ministry of Tourism & Culture, MEA, Ministry of Textiles, and ICCR.

News in Brief

- 39th edition of Surajkund showcasing traditional Indian crafts
- Theme: 'Local to Global - Aatmanirbhar Bharat identity'
- Draws artisans and cultural practitioners worldwide
- Hosted by Tourism, Textiles, Culture, MEA ministries and ICCR

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **39th Surajkund Mela** – 1-15 Feb 2026, Faridabad Haryana (annual, 55km south Delhi); showcases 200+ artisan communities, handlooms, handicrafts from India/Asia; 700,000+ visitors annual.
- **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** – Self-reliant India; PM Modi flagship vision (announced May 2020); promoting indigenous products, crafts, MSME; Surajkund Mela theme Local to Global.
- **Ministry of Tourism and Culture** – Union Ministry; supports cultural events, heritage preservation, artisan welfare; partner in Surajkund organization; allocates Rs 600+ cr for cultural events annually.
- **ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations)** – Est. 1950, New Delhi; promotes cultural exchanges with 170+ countries; supports cultural ambassadors, exhibitions; partner in Surajkund Mela.
- **Handicraft Exports Market** – India handicrafts worth Rs 30,000 cr annually (global market Rs 1.5 lakh cr); Surajkund showcases 40+ product categories: textiles, ceramics, metalwork, wood, leather; export orders facilitated.
- **Artisan Livelihood** – 2.8M+ artisans in India; Surajkund provides platform for direct sales (bypass middlemen); average artisan earns Rs 2-5 lakh mela season; women artisans 30 percent participation.
- **Cultural Diplomacy** – Neighboring SAARC countries participate; Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal artisans showcased; promotes regional crafts understanding; UNESCO recognition pending for several Indian craft traditions.

Prelims Pointers

- UNESCO Intangible Heritage – conventions protecting cultural traditions
- Cultural goods trade – handicrafts, textiles, art forms export
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat Mission – indigenization of critical sectors
- ICCR – Indian Council for Cultural Relations promoting Indian culture abroad

1st UN International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation (Dushanbe)

Tajikistan hosted the 1st UN International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation in Dushanbe in collaboration with UNESCO and the WMO. This led to the adoption of the Dushanbe Glaciers Declaration, signaling a global commitment to monitoring the accelerating retreat of the world's ice masses.

News in Brief

- Glacier Retreat: Nepal officially lost the Yala Glacier (Langtang), which has shrunk by 66% since the 1970s.
- National Loss: Venezuela became the second country globally, after Slovenia, to lose all its glaciers.
- Historical Marker: The world's first "glacier funeral" was held for the Okjokull glacier in Iceland in 2019.
- Indian Milestone: India's first High-Altitude Climate Research Station was established in Nathatop, Jammu and Kashmir.

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **UN Conference on Glaciers** – 1st International Conference 2024 Dushanbe Tajikistan; organized by UNEP, UNESCO, WMO; first UN-level global glacier summit.
- **Dushanbe Glaciers Declaration** – Adopted 2024; signals global commitment monitoring glacier retreat; includes targets for glacier research funding, technology transfer to mountain countries.
- **Mountain Glaciers Crisis** – 9M glaciers globally (>200,000 km²); retreating 500 Gt/decade (sea-level rise driver); Hindu Kush-Himalayas: 45,000 glaciers supporting 2B+ downstream population (water security).
- **UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, est. 1945, HQ Paris; supports mountain biosphere reserves including Himalayas; leads glacier monitoring via Mountain Watch program.
- **WMO (World Meteorological Organization)** – Est. 1950, HQ Geneva; tracks glacier mass balance, precipitation patterns; 193 members; IPCC partnership for climate assessments.
- **Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region** – World 3rd largest glacier reserve; 2 billion downstream population; critical for monsoon, water security South/East Asia; Tajikistan, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, China glacier-dependent economies.
- **Glacier Monitoring Network** – UNEP Glaciers Initiative; 150+ reference glaciers tracked globally; sentinel sites in Alps, Himalayas, Andes; data feeds IPCC assessments; developing countries need capacity support.

Prelims Connect

- Consequences of Glacial Loss

Prelims Pointers

- The UN has designated 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation.
- The Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences spans from 2025 to 2034.
- March 21 will now be observed annually as World Day for Glaciers.
- The Nathatop station is affiliated with the WMO Global Atmospheric Watch (GAW) Programme.

BRICS & SCO SUMMITS

17th BRICS Summit Rio de Janeiro – India Assumes Chairship 2026

17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (July 2025). Theme: 'Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance'. India to assume BRICS Chairship and host 18th Summit in 2026. New members: Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia (2024); Indonesia (2025).

News in Brief

- India assumes BRICS Chairship for 2026
- 18th BRICS Summit to be hosted by India in 2026

- Expansion: Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia joined 2024; Indonesia 2025
- Rio de Janeiro Declaration adopted for expansion and South-South cooperation

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **17th BRICS Summit** – Rio de Janeiro Brazil, July 2025; theme "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance"; 5 founding members + 4 new members (2024-25).
- **BRICS Founding** – Founded 2009 Brazil, Russia, India, China (BRIC); South Africa joined 2011 (BRICS); represents 42 percent global GDP, 23 percent population (2024); annual summits since 2009.
- **2024 Expansion** – Iran (confirmed 2023, joined 2024), UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia approved Aug 2023 Johannesburg; Indonesia approved Aug 2024; BRICS now 11 members; Saudi Arabia, Thailand pendency.
- **India Chairship 2026** – India assumes rotating presidency 2026-2027; to host 18th BRICS Summit in India (typically annual, alternate venues); India co-founded BRICS development bank ideas (NDB, Contingency Fund).
- **BRICS New Development Bank** – Est. 2014, Shanghai China HQ; 5 founding members (now 10+ associate); \$100B capital; funds infrastructure in Global South; alternative to IMF/World Bank.
- **BRICS Contingency Fund** – Established 2014, \$100B reserve pool; liquidity support for member balance-of-payments crises; alternative to IMF lending conditionality.
- **Global South Coalition** – BRICS+ represents 70+ countries through partnerships; alternative power center vs G7; addresses common issues: development finance, climate equity, technology transfer, reformed multilateralism.

Prelims Pointers

- BRICS Bank (NDB) – New Development Bank for South-South lending
- Reserve Currency (De-dollarization) – reducing USD dependence
- Shared Development Vision – common interests on climate, trade
- Counter to Western institutions – challenging IMF, World Bank hegemony

BRICS Sherpa Meetings & Youth Council Initiatives

BRICS Youth Council Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting organized March 3-7, 2025 with theme 'Youth Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Growth'. BRICS Youth Summit hosted in Gandhinagar, Gujarat (Feb 7-11, 2025) with theme 'Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange'.

News in Brief

- BRICS Youth Council meeting March 2025 on entrepreneurship
- BIMSTEC Youth Summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat Feb 7-11, 2025
- Theme: 'Youth as a bridge for intra-regional exchange'
- Jointly organized by Youth Affairs & Sports Ministry and MEA

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **BRICS Youth Council** – Established 2012; supports youth entrepreneurship, cultural exchange; holds annual summits alongside main summits; develops future BRICS leadership.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group** – Meeting March 3-7 2025 theme Sustainable Growth; focus: startup incubation, venture capital access, fintech innovation in emerging markets.
- **BRICS Youth Summit Gandhinagar** – Feb 7-11 2025 Gujarat India; theme Youth as bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange; India positioning youth as drivers of regional cooperation across South Asia.

- **BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative)** – Est. 1997, Bangkok HQ; 7 members: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand; framework for subregional cooperation; India proposes deeper youth-BIMSTEC linkage.
- **Youth Startup Ecosystem** – BRICS nations host 30,000 young founders; India 15,000 startups avg age 28; Brazil, Russia 5,000 each; South Africa 2,000; fintech/AI/logistics focus; collective 50B USD VC investment.
- **Skill Development Programs** – Youth Council sponsors coding bootcamps, entrepreneurship workshops, mentorship networks; India NASSCOM partnership trains 5M IT youth; similar initiatives Brazil (ABVCAP), South Africa (Naspers incubators).
- **Regional Integration Focus** – BIMSTEC youth exchange reduces North-South Asia barriers; student scholarships (India offers 1,000/year); cultural festivals strengthening people-to-people ties across 7 nations.

Prelims Pointers

- BIMSTEC – Bay of Bengal Initiative (7 nations: India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan)
- Youth employment – linking skills to economic opportunities
- Digital entrepreneurship – tech startups and online businesses
- Sustainable livelihoods – green economy job creation

SCO Defence Ministers Meeting – Terrorism Stance

At Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' meeting in Qingdao, China. India declined to sign joint statement over diluted language on terrorism and pushed for tougher language reflecting Indian position, especially after Pahalgam terror attack (April 22, 2025).

News in Brief

- SCO Defence Ministers meeting in Qingdao, China
- India declined joint statement over weak terrorism language
- Pushed for tougher stance reflecting Indian security concerns
- Response to Pahalgam terror attack in Kashmir

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation** – Est. 2001 Shanghai, HQ Beijing China; 10 full members (India 2015, Pakistan 2017); 3 observer states (Belarus, Iran, Mongolia); counterterrorism/security focused regional bloc.
- **SCO Defence Ministers Meeting** – Qingdao China 2025; India declined joint statement over diluted terrorism language; insisted on stronger wording on cross-border terrorism, especially Pakistan-sponsored attacks.
- **Pahalgam Terror Attack** – April 22 2025 Kashmir; led to India hardline stance at SCO on terrorism definition; India emphasizes state-sponsored terrorism vs generalized combating extremism language.
- **Regional Counterterrorism** – SCO Charter includes Article 5: counterterrorism cooperation; Shanghai Convention 2001 on terrorism/separatism/extremism (CIS); India prioritizes cross-border terror funding tracking.
- **India-Pakistan Dynamic** – Both SCO members since 2017; conflicting interests on terrorism definition (India: state-sponsored, Pakistan: independence movements); India uses SCO forum to isolate Pakistan terrorism narrative.
- **China-Russia Influence** – Co-leaders of SCO; pursue consensus model favoring geopolitical neutrality; India seeks counterbalance through Vietnam, Japan dialogue partnerships outside SCO.

- **RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure)** – SCO subsidiary, Tashkent HQ; coordinates counterterrorism operations, intelligence sharing; 1,200+ staff; conducts joint exercises, member training.

Prelims Pointers

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) – China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Central Asian nations
- Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure (RCTS) – SCO's anti-terror body
- Cross-border terrorism – threat to SCO member states
- Consensus in multilateral diplomacy – challenges of 8-member consensus

6th BIMSTEC Summit Thailand – India's Regional Initiatives

6th BIMSTEC Summit hosted by Thailand (current chair). Theme: 'BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient and Open'. PM Modi announced BODHI program (BIMSTEC for Organized Development of Human Resource Infrastructure), BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce, annual Business Summit in India, Athletics Meet, and first BIMSTEC Games 2027.

News in Brief

- 6th BIMSTEC Summit held in Thailand with India's major initiatives
- BODHI program: training and scholarships for BIMSTEC professionals
- BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce and annual Business Summit announced
- BIMSTEC Maritime Transport Agreement signed
- "Bangkok Vision 2030" (PRO BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient, and Open) were finalized in February 2025.

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **6th BIMSTEC Summit** – Thailand 2024 (current chair); theme Prosperous, Resilient and Open; 7 member states; India regional diplomatic flagship.
- **BODHI Program** – BIMSTEC for Organized Development of Human Resource Infrastructure; PM Modi announced; scholarships, capacity-building for 7-member countries; Rs 50M initial Indian commitment.
- **BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce** – Launched 2025; facilitates intra-regional trade; targets 100B USD intra-BIMSTEC commerce by 2030 (current ~20B USD); supports MSME networking across Bay of Bengal.
- **BIMSTEC Games 2027** – 1st ever regional multi-sport games 2027; modeled on Southeast Asian Games; India proposed; strengthens people-to-people ties; tentative Mumbai venue.
- **Bay of Bengal Trade Corridor** – BIMSTEC aims joint maritime infrastructure; ports in Kolkata, Chittagong (Bangladesh), Yangon (Myanmar), Bangkok coordinate; shipping lane efficiency gains 15-20 percent.
- **Infrastructure Connectivity** – Motor Vehicles Pact signed 2020; road corridors Delhi-Bangkok-Singapore; BIMSTEC rail projects; India-Myanmar-Thailand highway; reducing trade costs 25-30 percent.
- **Climate and Disaster Management** – BIMSTEC Disaster Management Framework; cyclone early warning systems; flood response coordination; India leading capacity-building via NRSC satellite monitoring, NDRF training programs.

Prelims Pointers

- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) – ASEAN+5 trade agreement
- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) – 8-nation regional body
- Act East Policy – India's engagement with Southeast Asia
- Blue Economy – leveraging maritime resources for development

BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival – Cultural Diplomacy

BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival for first time in 2025 organized at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Themed 'Saptasur: Seven Nations, One Melody'. Announced by PM Modi during BIMSTEC Summit Thailand (April 2025). Cultural initiative promoting regional heritage.

News in Brief

- First BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival held in New Delhi
- Theme: 'Saptasur: Seven Nations, One Melody'
- At Bharat Mandapam showcasing regional musical traditions
- Part of India's cultural diplomacy in BIMSTEC framework

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **BIMSTEC Music Festival** – 1st edition 2025, Bharat Mandapam New Delhi; theme Saptasur: Seven Nations, One Melody; showcases music traditions from 7 members.
- **Cultural Diplomacy Initiative** – PM Modi announced at April 2025 BIMSTEC Summit Thailand; aims soft power outreach, heritage preservation across region; follows Raisina Dialogue model.
- **Saptasur Concept** – Sanskrit: seven tones (Sa-Ri-Ga-Ma-Pa-Dha-Ni); metaphor for 7 BIMSTEC nations in harmony; classical Indian music reference; appeals to cultural pride across Buddhist/Hindu-majority nations.
- **Regional Heritage Preservation** – Festival supports traditional artists from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand; documentation of endangered musical traditions; UNESCO-style recognition.
- **Musical Traditions Showcased** – Indian classical (Hindustani, Carnatic), Baul music (Bengal), Bhutanese Zhungdrak, Thai Khim, Myanmar Saung Gauk, Nepali folk; fusion performances blending traditions; workshops for cross-cultural learning.
- **Academic Partnerships** – Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) Delhi partners; documenting songs via AYUSH archives; music therapy sessions; UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage proposals for 5 traditions.
- **Youth Engagement** – BIMSTEC Youth Orchestra formation planned post-festival; annual musical exchange programs; training scholarships for 50 young musicians from member nations at Indian music institutions (NSD, IIT Bombay music lab).

Prelims Pointers

- UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage – protecting traditional knowledge
- Regional cooperation through cultural initiatives – BIMSTEC framework
- Soft power – cultural influence in international relations
- Heritage preservation – documenting and promoting traditional arts

G20 & G7 SUMMITS

20th G20 Summit Johannesburg – First African Summit

20th G20 Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa (November 2025). First G20 summit on African continent. Theme: 'Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability'. Highlights: Mission 300 (electricity for 300M in Sub-Saharan Africa), Nelson Mandela Bay Target (5% NEET reduction by 2030), 25% gender parity in labour force by 2030.

News in Brief

- First-ever G20 summit held on African continent
- Theme: 'Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability'

- Mission 300: 300 million people electricity access in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030
- Nelson Mandela Target: 5% reduction in youth NEET by 2030

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **20th G20 Summit** – Johannesburg South Africa, Nov 2025; first G20 summit on African continent; theme "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability"; 20 + EU + African Union.
- **G20 Formation** – Est. 1999 post-Asian financial crisis; 19 countries + EU; represents 85 percent global GDP, 75 percent world trade; annual summits rotating presidency.
- **Mission 300 Initiative** – Target: electricity access for 300M Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030; renewable energy focus; launched Johannesburg 2025; India co-sponsoring clean energy finance facility.
- **Nelson Mandela Bay Target** – Named after Mandela Bay South Africa; aims 5 percent NEET reduction (Not in Education, Employment, Training) by 2030; youth skills development priority; aligns SDG 8.
- **Gender Parity Target** – 25 percent women in labour force globally by 2030; G20 focus on women economic participation; India spearheading women entrepreneurship agenda.
- **Johannesburg Summit Outcomes** – African Union admitted as permanent member; Climate finance scaling renewed; debt restructuring for developing nations discussed.

Prelims Pointers

- G20 troika – previous (Brazil), current (South Africa), next (US) presidencies
- Global economic governance – coordinating policy across major economies
- Multilateral development institutions – World Bank, African Development Bank
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – 2030 Agenda alignment

India's G20 Legacy – Implementation Phase

India held G20 presidency in 2023. Current events focus on implementing India's G20 legacy agenda. Topics: financial inclusion, climate finance, development cooperation, and multilateral reforms. India works on consensus-building across 19 countries plus EU and African Union.

News in Brief

- India's 2023 G20 presidency legacy continues implementation
- Focus on global financial inclusion and climate finance
- Development cooperation priorities across emerging markets
- Multilateral institution reforms advocated by India

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **India G20 Presidency** – 2023-2024 (Dec 2022 - Dec 2023); hosting 2023 Summit New Delhi (Sep 9-10 2023); consensus-driven approach; One Earth, One Family, One Future theme.
- **New Delhi Leaders Declaration** – G20 2023 summit outcome; achieved consensus on climate finance, development cooperation, multilateral reform despite Ukraine tensions; India diplomatic success.
- **Financial Inclusion Priority** – India G20 focus: digital payments (UPI model), broadening credit access, fintech inclusion; UPI as global case study; advocating similar models for Africa, Southeast Asia.
- **Climate Finance Mechanism** – India proposed climate mitigation fund; emphasized Loss and Damage finance; advocated 500B USD annual commitment to developing nations by 2030.
- **Development Cooperation Agenda** – Focus on SDGs, debt sustainability for low-income countries; India Global South coalition approach; LDCs and landlocked countries priority agenda items.

- **Multilateral Reform Push** – India advocated UN Security Council expansion, IMF/World Bank governance reform; emerging markets deserve greater voting share (currently 30 percent); India 4th largest economy by GDP PPP.
- **Implementation Framework** – G20 working groups on trade, investment, tax cooperation continuing post-India presidency; India chairing several committees 2024-2025; follow-up summits in Brazil 2024, South Africa 2025 tracking progress.

Prelims Pointers

- Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) – IMF reserve assets for development
- Loss and Damage Fund – supporting climate-vulnerable nations
- Global South voice – India representing developing countries
- Consensus-building – managing divergent interests of 19 major economies

Quad Summit & Indo-Pacific Logistics Network

Quad partners (Australia, India, Japan, USA) convened at Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii (May 2025) for Tabletop Exercise launching Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN). IPLN enables shared logistics for civilian disaster response across Indo-Pacific.

News in Brief

- Quad Tabletop Exercise in Honolulu, May 2025
- Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN) launched
- Shared logistics capabilities for disaster response
- IPLN launched during 4th Quad Leaders Summit (Sept 2024)

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Quad Partnership** – Quadrilateral Security Dialogue; Australia, India, Japan, USA; est. 2007; formal summit process 2021 onwards; strategic coalition for Indo-Pacific stability, supply chain resilience.
- **May 2025 Tabletop Exercise** – Held Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Honolulu Hawaii; simulated maritime disaster response; tested coordination mechanisms for crisis management.
- **Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN)** – Quad initiative for shared logistics support (civilian disaster response); pre-positioned supplies in partner nations; reduces response time for cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis.
- **Quad Supply Chain Resilience** – Critical minerals, semiconductor supply chains; India-Japan pharma, semiconductor cooperation; Australia rare earths; US advanced tech; reducing China dependence priority.
- **Geopolitical Counterbalance** – Quad positioned as counter to China assertiveness (South China Sea, BRI); India-Japan defense dialogues; US pivot to Indo-Pacific doctrine; Australia strategic partnerships expansion.
- **Technological Standards Setting** – Quad promoting 5G standards (non-China), semiconductors (Japan-USA fab partnerships), AI ethics (India-Australia collaborations); standards eventually influence global tech governance.
- **Economic Corridor Development** – Japan yen loans 1B USD infrastructure (India-Myanmar-Thailand); Australia-India ports modernization; USA tech investment facilitation; targeting economic interdependence reducing conflict risks.

Prelims Pointers

- Indo-Pacific strategy – balancing China's rise with open order
- Disaster risk reduction – SDG 13 climate resilience

- Humanitarian assistance – HADR operations in emergencies
- Regional multipolarity – countering hegemonic threats

NATO Summit The Hague – Defence Spending & Eastern Europe

NATO Summit (The Hague Summit) held in The Hague, Netherlands (June 24-25, 2025). Meeting of 32 NATO members, partner countries, and EU. Focus: member states pledge to increase defence spending to 5% of GDP. Response to Russia's actions and security concerns.

News in Brief

- NATO Summit in The Hague with 32 NATO members
- Key focus: increasing defence spending to 5% of GDP
- Partner countries and EU participation
- Response to regional security challenges

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **NATO Summit The Hague** – 24-25 June 2025, The Hague Netherlands; 32 NATO members, partners, EU officials; biennial NATO Summit.
- **NATO Defence Spending** – Pledge 2006; 5 percent of GDP target by 2025 (raised from 2 percent); 23 NATO members meeting (2025); Baltics, Poland exceed 3 percent; Germany committed 100B euro defense increase.
- **Eastern Europe Security** – NATO expansion: Finland (2023), Sweden (2024); Ukraine conflict driver; forward bases in Poland, Romania, Baltic states; nuclear posture review 2025.
- **NATO-EU Coordination** – Strategic Compass 2022; combined EU defense spending 300B euro; interoperability agreements with NATO; Arctic security focus.
- **Nuclear Deterrence Posture** – NATO nuclear weapons modernization; B61-12 tactical nukes deployed Europe; Russia counters with Sarmat hypersonic missiles; escalation spiral concerns; diplomatic track stalling.
- **Ukraine Support Framework** – NATO pledged 100B USD annual military aid Ukraine; ATACMS, Patriot, F-16s supplied; training centers in Poland, Germany; long-term security guarantees post-conflict rebuilding.
- **China Security Dimension** – NATO 2024 expanded mandate mentions China as challenge; semiconductor supply disruption risks; Taiwan contingency planning; India-Japan-South Korea security dialogues informally linked NATO planning.

Prelims Pointers

- Article 5 – NATO collective defence clause
- Strategic autonomy – European defence capability building
- Deterrence – maintaining military capability against adversaries
- Transatlantic alliance – US-Europe security partnership

World Green Economy Summit 2025 – Sustainable Finance

11th World Green Economy Summit held in Dubai, UAE (October 2025). Co-located with WETEX. Theme: 'Innovating for Impact'. Over 3,300 participants discussed climate action.

News in Brief

- 11th WGES held in Dubai with WETEX 2025
- 3,300+ participants from 30+ countries

- Focus on AI sustainability and net-zero targets
- Public-Private Partnership models for green infrastructure

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **11th World Green Economy Summit** – October 2025 Dubai UAE; co-located with WETEX (World Energy and Technology Expo); 3,300 participants.
- **Green Economy Focus** – Sustainable finance mechanisms, ESG investing, green bonds; carbon pricing, renewable energy transitions; UAE positioning as green finance hub post-COP28 presidency.
- **Innovating for Impact Theme** – Climate action technologies, nature-based solutions, circular economy; startup pitches, investment rounds; VC focus on climate tech in MENA/Asia.
- **WETEX Coexistence** – World Energy and Technology Exhibition; combines clean energy (solar, wind) with fossil fuel sessions; pragmatic energy transition dialogue; attracts 150,000 visitors annually.
- **Green Finance Mechanisms** – Green bonds issued 500B USD globally 2024; carbon credits trading 80B USD market; blended finance (public-private) targeting 1T USD climate investment by 2030; UAE Sustainability Fund 50B AED commitment.
- **Technology Innovation Showcase** – Green hydrogen production (electrolyzer costs down 60 percent); battery storage breakthroughs (lithium alternatives); carbon capture (direct air capture scale-up); circular economy startups (plastic recycling, e-waste upcycling).
- **Regional Implementation** – MENA region renewable capacity 60 GW by 2030 target; Saudi Arabia transitioning oil economy (NEOM project, renewables expansion); UAE 50 percent clean energy 2030; India-Middle East corridor opportunities.

Prelims Pointers

- Sustainable Development Goals alignment
- Climate finance mechanisms
- Energy transition and renewables
- Circular economy principles

TRADE & ECONOMIC SUMMITS

World Economic Forum Davos 2026 – Global Economic Dialogue

World Economic Forum 2026 Annual Meeting held in Davos, Switzerland. Theme: 'A Spirit of Dialogue'. Brought together nearly 3,000 global leaders from government, business, civil society. Premier platform for global economic and geopolitical discussions.

News in Brief

- WEF Davos 2026 with nearly 3,000 global leaders
- Theme: 'A Spirit of Dialogue'
- Participation from governments, corporations, civil society, academia
- Premier platform for global economic and political dialogue

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **World Economic Forum** – Est. 1971, HQ Cologne Switzerland; annual meeting Jan Davos; convenes 3,000 political, business, civil society leaders; influential agenda-setting platform for global economics/geopolitics.

- **Davos 2026** – Theme A Spirit of Dialogue; addresses great power tensions, economic inequality, technological disruption, climate action; India delegation high-profile attendance.
- **WEF Global Competitiveness Index** – Annual ranking 140+ countries on innovation, governance, education, infrastructure; India ranked ~40th; influences investment decisions, policy priorities.
- **Stakeholder Capitalism Model** – WEF advocates balancing shareholder returns with stakeholder interests (workers, communities, environment); influences ESG frameworks, corporate governance globally.
- **Davos Forum Participants** – 2,500+ CEOs, 1,000+ politicians/govt officials, 500+ academics, 300+ media; net worth 30 trillion USD; controls 75 percent global GDP; influence on global policy narratives.
- **Global Risks Report** – WEF annual publication assessing 35 global risks (geopolitical, climate, tech, economic); 2025 report emphasizes AI, polarization, climate tipping points; informs corporate risk strategies.
- **Young Global Leaders Program** – Identifies 100 leaders under 40 annually; India representatives 50+ since 2005; shapes future governance, entrepreneurship, activism; networking platform worth 500M USD career advantage.

Prelims Pointers

- Global governance structures – multilateral institutions and forums
- Economic development – sustainable and inclusive growth models
- Technology governance – regulating emerging technologies
- Social responsibility – corporate and government accountability

World Seafood Congress 2026 – Blue Economy & Fisheries

World Seafood Congress 2026 hosted in Chennai. Major platform for global fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood sector. Highlights sustainable fishing practices, blue economy, and seafood sector innovation. Expected participation from seafood industry and marine scientists worldwide.

News in Brief

- World Seafood Congress 2026 held in Chennai
- Focus on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
- Blue economy and seafood sector innovation
- Global seafood industry participation

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **World Seafood Congress 2026** – Chennai India; largest global seafood industry conference; 3,000+ participants from aquaculture, fishing, processing sectors; triennial; India seafood hub status.
- **India Seafood Production** – 9M tonnes annual (fish 7M, aquaculture 2M); Rs 50,000 cr export value (6B USD); 18 million fishers; world 3rd largest producer; marine capture declining, aquaculture growing.
- **Blue Economy Transition** – Sustainable fishing practices, aquaculture intensification, seaweed farming, offshore wind; carbon-neutral seafood value chains; India positioning coastal states as innovation hubs.
- **Sustainable Fisheries Standard** – FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) equivalents; MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certification; India promoting coastal community-based management models vs industrial trawling.
- **IUU Fishing Crisis** – Illegal, Unregulated, Unreported fishing costs 23B USD annually; India combating via satellite surveillance (NRSC), port state control; blockchain for seafood traceability reducing fraud.

- **Aquaculture Innovation** – Shrimp farming 1.2M tonnes (Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh leaders); tilapia, carp expansion; RAS (Recirculating Aquaculture Systems) reducing water waste 90 percent; seaweed farming growing 30 percent CAGR.
- **Climate Resilience** – Fish stocks shifting pole-wards due to warming oceans; Indian waters warming 2x global average; Congress focuses ocean acidification, temperature adaptation for species; migration corridors mapping.

Prelims Pointers

- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) – coastal nation's 200nm jurisdiction
- Common Pool Resources – managing shared fisheries
- FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
- SDG 14 – Life Below Water (marine conservation)

14th Asian Fisheries & Aquaculture Forum – Regional Cooperation

14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (14AFAF) organized in New Delhi. Hosted in India for 2nd time after 8AFAF in Kochi 2007. Theme: 'Greening the Blue Growth in Asia-Pacific'. Headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

News in Brief

- 14th AFAF held in New Delhi, India's 2nd time hosting
- Theme: 'Greening the Blue Growth in Asia-Pacific'
- Previous hosting: Kochi 2007 (8th edition)
- Headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **14AFAF (Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum)** – 14th edition New Delhi 2024-25; biennial; HQ Kuala Lumpur Malaysia; 23 APFIC (Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission) members.
- **Greening Blue Growth Theme** – Sustainable aquaculture, habitat restoration, climate-resilient fisheries; SDG 14 alignment; technology transfer to least-developed countries in Asia-Pacific.
- **8AFAF Kochi 2007** – Previous India hosting 2007; marked India aquaculture leadership recognition; Kochi as major seafood processing hub (200+ units).
- **APFIC Governance** – FAO regional body, 15 member countries; coordinates fisheries policies; science-based management via research centers in Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam.
- **Asia-Pacific Fishery Capacity** – Asia produces 90 percent world fish (500M tonnes); 100M livelihoods fisheries/aquaculture sector; 4B people dependent on fish protein; over-exploitation risks threaten food security.
- **Regional Cooperation Framework** – APFIC Code of Conduct Responsible Fisheries 1995; Stock Assessment shared databases; fleet capacity management; India-Vietnam-Thailand-Myanmar coordination on Mekong fish stocks.
- **Technology Transfer Initiatives** – AFAF facilitates skills training 500 technicians/yr from LDCs; hatchery management, disease control, feed formulation workshops; donor countries (Japan, South Korea) funding capacity-building centers.

Prelims Pointers

- ASEAN Fisheries Committee – regional coordination body
- Sustainable Aquaculture Development – SDG 12 and 14 alignment
- Climate-smart fisheries – adapting to climate change

- Technology transfer – sharing best practices across region

WAVES Summit – World Audio Visual & Entertainment

WAVES Summit (World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit) inaugural event in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Positioned as India's global event for entertainment sector similar to Davos for economics. CIDCO signed MoUs worth Rs 3,000 crore with five universities (York, Western Australia, Aberdeen, Illinois Tech, Istituto Europeo).

News in Brief

- Inaugural WAVES Summit held in Mumbai
- Positioned as India's Davos for entertainment sector
- Five international universities opening campuses in Mumbai/Navi Mumbai
- MoUs worth Rs 3,000 crore for education infrastructure

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **WAVES Summit** – Inaugural 2025 Mumbai Maharashtra; World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit; India equivalent to Davos for entertainment sector; biennale planned.
- **India Content Industry** – Film (1,000+ movies/year), OTT (YouTube, Netflix, Prime, Hotstar 150M+ users), animation, gaming; 25B USD market by 2026; 1.5M workforce; talent export to global studios.
- **CIDCO MoUs** – Cinema, Innovation, Development Corporation signed Rs 3,000 cr collaboration with 5 universities: York (Canada), Western Australia, Aberdeen (UK), Illinois Tech (USA), Istituto Europeo (Italy); film studies, animation training.
- **Hollywood-Bollywood Convergence** – Co-productions increasing; tax incentives for foreign productions in India; VFX/animation outsourcing to Bangalore, Hyderabad (1.5B USD/year).
- **Digital Content Boom** – OTT platforms 200M+ subscribers India; original content spending 2B USD annually; regional language content (Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam) growing 40 percent CAGR; IMAI 450M digital users.
- **Gaming and Metaverse** – India gaming market 2B USD (300M gamers); esports tournaments prize pools 50M USD annually; metaverse investments by studios (TMKOC, Tandav virtual worlds); blockchain gaming adoption rising.
- **Skills and Employment** – WAVES promotes film schools expansion (100+ institutes producing 10,000 graduates/yr); animation courses in 50 cities; freelance economy for VFX/music producers worth 500M USD; gig worker protection discussions.

Prelims Pointers

- India as content production hub – film and digital media
- Education exports – attracting international students
- Infrastructure development – education cities and tech parks
- Cultural diplomacy – exporting Indian creativity globally

ASEAN-GCC Summit – Economic Resilience & Trade Partnership

ASEAN-GCC Summit held in Kuala Lumpur, May 2025. Three-day summit among 10-member ASEAN and 6 GCC nations. Objective: bolster economic resilience amid global volatility.

News in Brief

- 16 nations (ASEAN 10 + GCC 6) participated
- Focus on economic resilience and trade cooperation

- Response to global volatility and U.S. tariffs
- GCC comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **ASEAN-GCC Summit** – Kuala Lumpur Malaysia, May 2025; 3-day economic summit; 10 ASEAN nations (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam) + 6 GCC nations.
- **GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)** – Est. 1981; Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE; economic bloc; 2.3T USD combined GDP; oil/gas/finance hub.
- **Economic Resilience Focus** – Global supply chain volatility, commodity price shocks, geopolitical tensions; ASEAN-GCC strengthening trade diversification, FDI corridors, fintech linkages.
- **Trade Volume Target** – Current ASEAN-GCC trade ~35B USD/year; summit aims 50 percent increase by 2030; focus on food security, energy, petrochemicals, financial services.
- **Energy Cooperation** – GCC oil/gas 40 percent global energy; ASEAN renewable capacity 200 GW by 2030 target; joint solar/wind projects planned; green hydrogen supply agreements under negotiation.
- **Food and Agriculture** – ASEAN agricultural output 100M tonnes rice, 20M tonnes palm oil; GCC food imports 80 percent (80B USD value); agreements for grain reserves, fishery cooperation, aquaculture tech transfer.
- **Strategic Infrastructure** – Port connectivity (Singapore Hub, Jebel Ali, Salalah); shipping lanes 50 percent global trade; telecom 5G networks; digital payment interoperability (ASEAN e-commerce 200B USD by 2025).

Prelims Pointers

- Regional trade agreements and tariff reduction
- Economic diversification strategies
- South-South cooperation models
- Investment flows between regions

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION SUMMITS

Kodaikanal Solar Observatory 125th Anniversary Conference

Conference on 'Sun, Space Weather, and Solar-Stellar Connections' organized by Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) in Bengaluru to commemorate 125th anniversary of Kodaikanal Solar Observatory, Tamil Nadu. KSO established 1899, cornerstone of Indian astronomy, frontline solar research.

News in Brief

- Kodaikanal Solar Observatory 125th anniversary conference
- Organized by Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru
- Focus on sun, space weather, and solar-stellar connections
- KSO established 1899, pioneering Indian solar research facility

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Kodaikanal Solar Observatory** – Est. 1899 Tamil Nadu India, hillstation 2340m elevation; oldest solar research facility in India; pioneering solar spectroscopy, sunspot tracking since 1899.
- **125th Anniversary Conference** – 2024 Bengaluru hosted by Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA); theme Sun, Space Weather, and Solar-Stellar Connections; celebrates 125 years continuous solar observation.

- **Indian Institute of Astrophysics** – Est. 1786, HQ Bangalore; operates Kodaikanal Observatory, Hanle High-Altitude Observatory (Ladakh 4500m), Indian Astronomical Observatory; 200+ researchers.
- **Solar Research Significance** – Space weather prediction (solar flares, CMEs) protecting satellites, power grids; climate impact of solar cycles; solar physics applied to renewable energy efficiency.
- **India Solar Astronomy Tradition** – Vedic texts document solar eclipses; Aryabhata calculated Earth circumference; KSO continuity from 1899 makes India leader in long-term solar data; UNESCO recognition pending.
- **Data Archives Significance** – 125 years continuous solar observations; sunspot database 1906-present; daily magnetogram records; climate research using solar proxy records (activity cycles); published 10,000+ research papers.
- **International Collaboration** – Data shared with NASA, ESA, ISRO; SOHO satellite coordination; solar dynamo research (11-year cycles); Indian contribution to IPCC solar forcing assessments (0.05 W/m² forcing estimates).

Prelims Pointers

- Indian Institute of Astrophysics – autonomous research institution
- Solar forecasting – predicting space weather events
- Satellite protection – monitoring solar activity impact
- Climate research – understanding solar influence on Earth's climate

Emerging Science & Innovation Conclave (ESTIC) – Replacing Indian Science Congress

The Indian Science Congress (ISC) is being replaced by Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC). First ESTIC scheduled for November 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Change due to issues and disagreements. Focus on emerging technologies and innovation.

News in Brief

- Indian Science Congress replaced by ESTIC
- First ESTIC scheduled November 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
- Focus on emerging science, technology and innovation
- New format addresses issues with ISC structure

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Indian Science Congress** – Est. 1914 Calcutta India; annual gathering scientists, policymakers; 300+ sessions; 10,000+ attendees; fell into disrepute 2018-2019 pseudoscience controversies.
- **ESTIC (Emerging Science, Technology, Innovation Conclave)** – Launched 2024, replacing ISC; 1st ESTIC Nov 2025 Bharat Mandapam New Delhi; focus: AI, biotechnology, quantum computing, green energy; rigorous peer-review process.
- **Reform Rationale** – ISC credibility issues: invited fringe science speakers; inadequate vetting; ESTIC aims rebuild scientific rigor, international standards; partnering with global science academies.
- **Ministry of Science and Technology** – DSIR (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research) oversees ESTIC; coordinates with CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) 38 laboratories nationwide.
- **CSIR Infrastructure** – 38 national laboratories (CSIR-IMTECH, CSIR-IICT, CSIR-NCCS, etc.); 4,500 scientists; 50,000 research papers/year; 2,000+ patents filed; promoting innovation-to-industry transition.

- **International Standards** – ESTIC adopts ICSU standards (International Council for Science); peer-reviewed proceedings; Scopus/WoS indexed publications; researcher evaluation via H-index; collaborations with Max Planck, CNRS, Royal Society institutes.
- **Emerging Tech Focus** – AI and ML applications in healthcare, agriculture, materials science; quantum computing roadmap (India 100 million USD investment); green hydrogen catalysts; semiconductors (200mm fab capacity building); nanotechnology applications.

Prelims Pointers

- Indian scientific community – researchers, academicians, innovators
- Self-reliance in science – Atmanirbhar Bharat in technology
- Startup ecosystem – supporting young innovators
- Global science cooperation – India joining international research

International Conference on Critical Metals (CRITMET 2025) – Mineral Security

CRITMET 2025 held in Jamshedpur. Hosted by CSIR-National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML), supported by Ministry of Mines. Focus on global cooperation, sustainable supply chains, and innovation in strategic minerals for green tech and defence. Experts from government, academia, industry participated.

News in Brief

- CRITMET 2025 held in Jamshedpur
- Hosted by CSIR-NML with Ministry of Mines support
- Focus on strategic minerals for green technology and defence
- International experts on sustainable mineral supply chains

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **CRITMET 2025** – Jamshedpur Jharkhand 2025; hosted by CSIR-National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML); Ministry of Mines partner; strategic minerals focus.
- **Critical Minerals Priority** – Rare earths (Li, Co, Ni for batteries), cobalt (Congo 70 percent global supply), lithium (Afghanistan, Chile), tungsten (China 80 percent supply); security risks for green energy transition.
- **India Mineral Position** – World 5th largest reserves; mined titanium, chromium, manganese, bauxite; supply chain challenges; 40 percent mineral imports; CRITMET addresses mineral diplomacy, substitution research.
- **CSIR-NML** – Est. 1820 Jamshedpur; 1,000 scientists; metallurgical research hub; develops sustainable mining technologies, value-added mineral processing; global partnerships with mining companies.
- **Battery Minerals Supply Chain** – Li-ion battery demand projected 500 GWh by 2030 (vs 100 GWh today); India 50 GWh production target; CRITMET explores local rare earth extraction (Rajasthan monazite, Andhra Pradesh), battery recycling (lithium recovery 90 percent).
- **Substitution Technologies** – Research on cobalt-free/nickel-rich batteries; silicon anodes replacing graphite; solid-state battery development (IIT-D, IIT-B projects); exploring alternative cathode materials (sodium-ion, manganese-rich).
- **Export and Strategic Autonomy** – India mineral exports (iron ore, manganese, chromite) 10B USD/year; processing value addition 50B USD potential; goal: vertical integration from mining to finished products (castings, alloys, refining) by 2030.

Prelims Pointers

- Atmanirbhar Bharat in minerals – self-reliance strategy
- Green energy transition – minerals for renewable technology

- Defence preparedness – securing supply for military equipment
- Sustainable mining – environmental responsibility in extraction

International Solar Alliance Assembly – Green Energy Leadership

8th International Solar Alliance Assembly held in New Delhi at Bharat Mandapam. Theme: 'One Sun, One World, One Grid' (OSOWOG). Launched SUNRISE Network (Solar Upcycling Network for Recycling, Innovation & Stakeholder Engagement) and Global Capability Centre ('Silicon Valley for Solar').

News in Brief

- 8th ISA Assembly in New Delhi at Bharat Mandapam
- Theme: 'One Sun, One World, One Grid' (OSOWOG)
- Launched SUNRISE Network for solar waste management
- Global Capability Centre for solar research and innovation

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **International Solar Alliance** – Est. 2015 India-France initiative, headquartered Delhi; 117 member + signatory countries; mobilizes 1T USD solar investment by 2030; first multilateral solar-focused organization.
- **8th ISA Assembly** – New Delhi Bharat Mandapam 2025; theme One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG); launched SUNRISE Network and Solar Silicon Valley initiative.
- **SUNRISE Network** – Solar Upcycling Network for Recycling, Innovation and Stakeholder Engagement; recovers 95 percent materials from decommissioned panels; circular economy model for 50M+ panels retiring by 2030.
- **Global Capability Centre** – Dubbed Silicon Valley for Solar; research hub in 3 sites (India, Africa, SEA); training centers for solar technicians, engineers; capacity-building for 50+ developing countries.
- **India Solar Capacity** – 100+ GW installed capacity (Jan 2025); 175 GW target by 2025, 280 GW by 2030; world 4th largest solar producer; cost-competitive: 25 USD/MWh (2024 auctions).
- **OSOWOG Concept** – One Sun, One World, One Grid proposes continental interconnection; Africa-Europe-Asia power transmission grids; India-Middle East-Africa solar corridor; enabling 24/7 renewable energy via geography arbitrage (time zone differences).
- **Technology Innovation** – Perovskite solar cells (25 percent efficiency lab prototypes, 15 percent commercial target); floating solar expansion (50 GW potential); integrated PV building systems (BIPV 10 GW opportunity); bifacial modules 35 percent cost reduction since 2020.

Prelims Pointers

- International Solar Alliance – India-led coalition of 117+ nations
- Green energy transition – SDG 7 (affordable clean energy)
- Climate action – reducing carbon emissions from power sector
- Energy security – renewable energy independence

World Artificial Intelligence Conference Shanghai 2025

2025 World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC2025) kicked off in Shanghai, China (July 2025). Major platform for AI research, policy, and industry collaboration. Featured discussions on AI governance, ethics, applications, and global standards.

News in Brief

- WAIC2025 held in Shanghai, China

- Major global AI research and policy platform
- Focus on AI governance, ethics, and global standards
- Industry participation in emerging AI technologies

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **WAIC 2025** – July 2025 Shanghai China; World Artificial Intelligence Conference; biennial; 500+ AI research papers, 150+ speakers; China flagship AI event post-generative AI boom.
- **AI Governance Focus** – Regulatory frameworks (EU AI Act 2024 vs light-touch approaches); ethics standards; bias detection; labor impact; surveillance/privacy concerns; WAIC 2025 emphasizes responsible AI.
- **China AI Ecosystem** – Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent leading; 1,500+ AI startups; government support (Ministry of Science and Tech, NEV-AIPP program); 5G rollout enabling edge AI applications.
- **AI Applications Discussed** – LLMs (ChatGPT 4, Qwen, Ernie), vision models, autonomous vehicles, robotics, biotech drug discovery, industrial defect detection.
- **China AI Investment** – 200B USD annual AI tech spending; 100M+ AI developers trained; 500+ unicorn startups (valuation 100M USD); government targets 1T USD AI market by 2030 (currently 200B USD).
- **Global AI Competition** – USA leads LLM innovation (OpenAI, Google, Anthropic); China focused on applications/scale; EU emphasizing regulation; India positioning as AI-for-development hub; Open Source alternatives (Llama, Falcon) democratizing access.
- **Ethical AI Frameworks** – WAIC 2025 panel discussions: fairness/transparency, labor displacement, surveillance risks; China social credit AI systems drawing criticism; WAIC advancing "trustworthy AI" benchmarks; UNESCO AI Recommendation implementation discussions.

Prelims Pointers

- China as AI leader – competing with USA and Europe
- Global AI competition – technology race implications
- Responsible AI – developing trustworthy systems
- AI for development – applications in emerging markets

DEFENCE & SECURITY CONFERENCES

Drug Trafficking & National Security Conference – NCB Initiative

Regional conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security' chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. Organized by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Focus on tackling drug trafficking impact on national security, with special focus on eight northern Indian states. Launched Drug Disposal Fortnight and MANAS-2 helpline extension.

News in Brief

- Regional conference on drug trafficking and national security
- Chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah
- Focus on eight northern states with drug trafficking concerns
- Launched Drug Disposal Fortnight and MANAS-2 helpline to 36 states/UTs

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Drug Trafficking Conference** – 2025 Vigyan Bhavan New Delhi; chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah; Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) organizer.

- **NCB (Narcotics Control Bureau)** – Est. 1986, Delhi HQ; India drug intelligence agency; 1,500+ staff; coordinates with state police, Customs, CBI; international partnerships DEA (USA), UNODC.
- **Eight Northern States Focus** – Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi; highest heroin/synthetic drug influx (Pakistan, Afghanistan sources); Rs 2,000 cr annual seizures.
- **Drug Disposal Fortnight** – Initiative to safely destroy confiscated narcotics; Rs 500 cr+ annual drugs destroyed; environmental protocols; public awareness campaign component.
- **MANAS-2 Helpline** – Mental health support for drug addiction recovery; toll-free number; counselors trained; integration with de-addiction centers nationally; expansion to 8 northern states from 2025.
- **Supply Chain Disruption** – Heroin trafficking via Pakistan (700 kg daily seized capacity); fentanyl synthesis labs busted (synthetic opioid 100x morphine potency); synthetic cathinones MDPV growing market; darknet Bitcoin payments 50 percent seizures value.
- **Cross-Border Cooperation** – Joint operations Pakistan-India intelligence; Iran drug seizures (50 percent global heroin transits); Afghanistan production (5,000 tonnes opium annually); DEA-NCB joint task force; Interpol Red Notices 2,000+ narcotrafickers.

Prelims Pointers

- Scheduled Drugs – narcotic substances under legal control
- NDPS Act – Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act
- Drug supply chains – from production to street sales
- Public health approach – treating addiction as health issue

Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025 – India's Counter-Terror Strategy

'Anti-Terrorism Conference-2025' inaugurated by Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi. Two-day event organized by National Investigation Agency (NIA). Government finalizing India's first national anti-terror policy as template for states. Launched Lost, Looted and Recovered Firearm (LLRF) national database.

News in Brief

- Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025 inaugurated by Home Minister
- Organized by National Investigation Agency (NIA)
- Finalizing India's first national anti-terror policy
- Launched LLRF database for firearm tracking

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025** – Inaugurated Feb 2025 New Delhi by Home Minister Amit Shah; 2-day event; National Investigation Agency (NIA) organizer.
- **NIA (National Investigation Agency)** – Est. 2009; 1,000+ officers; investigates terror, communal violence, cybercrime cases; 5,000+ FIRs filed since 2009; high conviction rate (90+%); international liaison offices.
- **National Anti-Terror Policy** – Government finalizing India 1st comprehensive anti-terror strategy; addresses radicalization, financing, cross-border terror, de-radicalization frameworks; model for state adoption.
- **LLRF Database** – Lost, Looted and Recovered Firearm national database; tracks illicit weapons; ballistic forensics; connected 1,500+ law enforcement agencies; reduces untraced gun crimes.
- **Financing Investigations** – Hawala tracking (underground money transfer networks); cryptocurrency seizures 500M USD value (2024); FATF Grey List implications (India compliance focus); terror funding freeze 200+ accounts/organizations.

- **Radicalization Prevention** – Counter-narrative campaigns via Ministry of Home Affairs; social media monitoring (Twitter, Telegram); rehabilitation centers (10 states); imam training programs (deradicalization messaging); youth alternative livelihoods schemes.
- **International Cooperation** – Interpol Joint Terror Task Force; FATF (Financial Action Task Force) mutual evaluations; USA-India Homeland Security dialogue; Israeli Shin Bet training programs; EU Europol information sharing.

Prelims Pointers

- UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (Prevention) Act – legal framework for anti-terror
- Designated Terrorist Groups – organizations banned under law
- Financial Action Task Force (FATF) – combating terror financing
- Border security – preventing infiltration and attacks

Colombo Security Conclave – Indian Ocean Region Stability

Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) expanded at 7th NSA-level meeting. Seychelles became sixth member state. NSA Ajit Doval hosted counterparts from Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh. Malaysia participated as guest. CSC evolved as key architecture for IOR stability.

News in Brief

- Colombo Security Conclave expanded to six members with Seychelles
- 7th NSA-level meeting at New Delhi
- Members: India, Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Seychelles
- Malaysia participating as guest state

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Colombo Security Conclave** – Informal grouping 6 Indian Ocean nations; India-led; founded 2021 (origins informal consultations 2019); focuses maritime security, counter-terrorism, regional stability.
- **7th CSC NSA Meeting** – National Security Advisors meeting; hosted by India NSA Ajit Doval; participants: Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Seychelles (newest member, 6th); Malaysia guest.
- **Seychelles Membership** – Admitted as 6th permanent member 2025; island nation, strategic IOR location; expands CSC presence across Indian Ocean sub-regions (East Africa, Maldives, South Asia).
- **IOR Stability Architecture** – Counter to Chinese strategic expansion (BRI, port investments); alternative to NATO/Western alliances; India positioning as leading IOR security provider; naval exercises (Maldives, Sri Lanka bases).
- **Maritime Coordination** – Joint patrols, intelligence sharing on piracy, IUU fishing, trafficking; coastal security protocols; port capacity-building assistance; India leading logistics support.
- **Chinese Belt and Road Concerns** – China 40B USD invested Indian Ocean (Hambantota Sri Lanka, ports Djibouti, Kenya); CSC counters via Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) coordination; port alternatives in India, Mauritius, Seychelles development.
- **Climate and Maritime Security Nexus** – Rising seas threaten island members (Seychelles, Mauritius 1m elevation); resource scarcity conflicts (fishing zones); CSC disaster response coordination (cyclone early warning, naval rescue); India SLINEX/MALABAR exercises demonstrate capabilities.

Prelims Pointers

- Indian Ocean as strategic arena – global power competition
- UNCLOS – Law of the Sea governance
- Sea Lane Security – protecting commerce and naval transit

- Counter-piracy operations – securing maritime trade routes

MILMEDICON 2025 – Military Medical Conference

MILMEDICON-2025: International Conference on Physical and Mental Trauma in Military Settings inaugurated by Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi. Two-day event organized by Directorate General of Medical Services (Army). Focus on trauma care in military medicine.

News in Brief

- MILMEDICON-2025 held at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi
- Inaugurated by MoS Defence Sanjay Seth
- Organized by Directorate General of Medical Services (Army)
- Focus on physical and mental trauma in military settings

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **MILMEDICON-2025** – 2025 Manekshaw Centre New Delhi; inaugurated by Minister of State Defence Sanjay Seth; Directorate General of Medical Services (Army) organizer.
- **Manekshaw Centre** – Armed Forces training institute, Delhi; HQ: Indian Army; focuses defense studies, military medicine, leadership development; 2,000+ annual trainees.
- **Physical and Mental Trauma Focus** – Combat trauma management, PTSD treatment, battlefield medicine; psychological first aid; rehabilitation protocols for wounded soldiers; focus on restorative neuroscience.
- **DGMS (Director General Medical Services)** – Armed Forces principal medical advisor; oversees 150+ military hospitals; 50,000+ medical personnel; coordinates tri-service medical policy; research on occupational health hazards.
- **Military Medical Infrastructure** – Command Hospital (Delhi, Bangalore, Pune, Lucknow); Army Hospital (Delhi); naval hospital INS Asvini; air force hospitals 20+; telemedicine network for remote bases; trauma centers upgraded post-Galwan.
- **PTSD and Mental Health** – High suicide rates servicemen (100+ annually); MILMEDICON emphasizes psychological first aid; counseling services expansion (50 psychiatrists, 200+ trained psych nurses); peer support groups for trauma recovery; suicide prevention hotlines.
- **Research and Development** – Blast injury research (IED impacts); prosthetics innovation (3D-printed limbs, robotic legs); telemedicine for battlefield triage; pharmaceutical research (anti-infection, pain management); joint research with ICMR institutes.

Prelims Pointers

- Defence Medical Services – healthcare system for armed forces
- Combat Casualty Care – emergency medicine in field operations
- Veterans rehabilitation – reintegration into civilian life
- Military psychology – mental health support for soldiers

UN Convention Against Cybercrime – Global Legal Framework

In October 2025, 72 nations signed the UN Convention against Cybercrime in Hanoi, Vietnam. First universal legal framework to combat cybercrime. Convention adopted by UN General Assembly December 2024.

News in Brief

- 72 nations signed convention in Hanoi, October 2025
- First universal legal framework for cybercrime

- Open for signatures until December 31, 2026
- Will enter into force once 40 countries ratify

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **UN Cybercrime Convention** – First universal international treaty on cybercrime; adopted UN General Assembly Dec 2024; signed by 72 nations Oct 2025 Hanoi Vietnam; requires 40 ratifications to enter force (21 by Apr 2026).
- **Convention Scope** – Covers criminal offenses (hacking, malware, cyberstalking, CSAM), jurisdiction, mutual legal assistance, evidence preservation; requires countries harmonize cybercrime laws; first binding global framework.
- **India Cybercrime Status** – 220M+ cybercrimes annually; Indian Penal Code Sec 66-79 (IT Act 2000) inadequate for cross-border prosecution; ratification of convention critical for mutual extradition, evidence sharing.
- **Hanoi Treaty Conference** – Vietnam hosted signing ceremony; UNODC facilitation; 72 signatories (includes USA, China, Russia, India); creates international cybercrime unit, evidence-sharing protocols.
- **Ratification Timeline** – 40-nation threshold triggers force in 2026; India ratification process underway (Cabinet approval, Parliamentary assent); enforcement from 2027 likely.
- **Digital Evidence Standards** – Convention harmonizes digital forensics standards; chain-of-custody protocols; encryption/decryption law compliance; cross-border data access (user data, metadata); challenges for privacy advocates (NSA/GCHQ surveillance concerns).
- **Developing Nation Capacity** – India, Nigeria, Brazil, Indonesia need digital forensics training; UNODC funding 500M USD capacity-building 5 years; India hosting regional cybercrime training center (New Delhi); police and judiciary upskilling 100,000 personnel.

Prelims Pointers

- International law enforcement cooperation
- Cybersecurity and data protection
- Cross-border investigation mechanisms
- Digital evidence standards

CULTURAL, SPORTS & SOCIAL SUMMITS

Global Big Cat Summit 2026 – Conservation Leadership

Global Big Cat Summit announced for 2026 in New Delhi under International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). Coalition of 95 range countries for conservation of seven big cats: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, Puma. Headquarters in New Delhi.

News in Brief

- Global Big Cat Summit 2026 to be hosted in New Delhi
- Under International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) – India-led coalition
- 95 range countries participating
- Focus on conservation of seven major big cat species

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **Global Big Cat Summit 2026** – India to host, New Delhi; announced at COP30 Belém Nov 2025; organized under International Big Cat Alliance framework.

- **International Big Cat Alliance** – Formed 2023, signed formally April 2023; India-led coalition 97 range countries; 7 apex predators targeted: Tiger (3,900 wild), Lion (20,000), Leopard (100,000), Snow Leopard (4,000), Jaguar (170,000), Puma (200,000), Cheetah (7,000 Africa).
- **IBCA Headquarters** – National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) Delhi, India; NTCA est. 1973 Tiger Project genesis; funds 50 Tiger Reserves (2.5M ha protected); director-level governance.
- **Tiger Conservation** – India priority: 3,900 tigers (70 percent global population); Project Tiger 1973-present; Rs 500 cr annual budget; Arunachal Pradesh, Sundarbans expansion; poaching decline 2018-2024.
- **Habitat-Species Nexus** – Protecting mega-forests (Western Ghats, Himalayas, Central India); human-wildlife conflict mitigation (compensation schemes Rs 1-2M per incident); community co-management of reserves.
- **Population Recovery Story** – Tiger numbers India rose 50 percent 2010-2018 (1,411 to 2,226); Sundarbans mangrove ecosystem expansion; forest corridor linkages (Central India landscape 165 sq km); genetic monitoring preventing inbreeding.
- **Transboundary Conservation** – Tiger corridors cross India-Nepal, India-Bhutan, India-Bangladesh borders; joint patrols (Wildlife Crime Control Bureau); shared prey populations (sambar, gaur); Terai Arc Landscape (2M ha) regional protected network.
- **Summit Objectives 2026** – Mobilizing 5B USD conservation finance; upgrading 25 tiger reserves infrastructure; technology adoption (AI camera traps, drone surveillance); community benefits scaling (50,000 artisanal wage employment); poaching countermeasures (ranger recruitment, equipment).

Prelims Pointers

- CITES – Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
- Project Tiger – India's successful big cat conservation program
- Habitat Corridor – protected passages for animal migration
- Human-animal conflict mitigation – reducing attacks on people and livestock

IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 – Global Conservation Agenda

IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 held in Abu Dhabi, UAE (Oct 9-15, 2025). Theme: 'Powering Transformative Conservation'. India launched National Red List roadmap (2025-2030) for endangered species. Project by Zoological and Botanical Surveys of India in partnership with IUCN.

News in Brief

- IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi, October 2025
- Theme: 'Powering Transformative Conservation'
- India launched National Red List roadmap for endangered species
- Collaboration between ZSI, BSI, and IUCN-India

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **IUCN** – International Union for Conservation of Nature, est. 1948, HQ Gland Switzerland; 1,400 member organizations (NGOs, governments); global Red List authority; 10,000+ species assessments annually.
- **WCC 2025 Abu Dhabi** – IUCN World Conservation Congress Oct 9-15 2025, Abu Dhabi UAE; biennial; 15,000+ delegates; sets conservation priorities, adopts resolutions; 2023 version was Marseille France.
- **Powering Transformative Conservation Theme** – Climate-biodiversity-people nexus; nature-based solutions scaling; indigenous rights integration; finance mechanisms for Global South conservation.

- **India Red List Roadmap** – National project 2025-2030 partnered with IUCN; assesses 100,000+ Indian species; Zoological Survey India (ZSI) and Botanical Survey India (BSI) lead; Red Data Book publications on vulnerable species.
- **ZSI and BSI** – Est. 1916 and 1890 respectively, Calcutta HQ; India species inventory authorities; 1,500+ staff; faunal/floral surveys in 30+ ecosystems; data feeds IUCN assessments.
- **IUCN Red List Crisis** – 150,000+ species globally assessed; 42,000+ threatened; extinction rates 100-1,000x background; habitat loss (agriculture, mining) primary driver; climate change accelerating extinction (coral bleaching 50 percent 2016-2020).
- **Conservation Solutions** – Protected area expansion (30x30 target); species recovery programs (Arabian oryx, Arabian leopard success); habitat restoration (mangrove, grassland); indigenous land rights recognition (protecting 80 percent biodiversity on 25 percent global land).

Prelims Pointers

- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – 2022 CBD agreement
- Endemic species – found nowhere else on Earth
- Conservation corridors – connected habitats for species movement
- Ecosystem services – nature's benefits to humanity

WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine – Health Integration

2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine held in New Delhi at Bharat Mandapam. Theme: 'Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being'. Jointly organized by Ministry of Ayush and WHO. Focus on implementing WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034.

News in Brief

- 2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in New Delhi
- Jointly organized by Ministry of Ayush and WHO
- Theme: 'Restoring balance: health and well-being'
- Focus on WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine** – New Delhi Bharat Mandapam Feb 2025; theme Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being; organized by Ministry of AYUSH and WHO.
- **WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034** – Adopted WHA meeting May 2023; 13 targets to integrate AYUSH into healthcare; evidence-based approaches; 170+ countries adopt strategies; WHO establishes Traditional Medicine Centre collaborating with India.
- **Ministry of AYUSH** – Est. 2014 (split from Health Ministry); Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy; 30,000+ practitioners AYUSH systems; Rs 1,000 cr annual budget; research institutes in 10+ states.
- **India AYUSH Advantage** – World largest AYUSH practitioners (350,000); 400-year Ayurveda texts (Charaka, Sushruta); 8,000+ AYUSH colleges; Rs 8,000 cr traditional medicine manufacturing; global exports Rs 1,500 cr.
- **Evidence Integration** – RCTs on Ayurveda treatments (joint pain, immunity); WHO partnerships for standardization; traditional knowledge documentation (TKDL database, 30M+ formulations); addressing antimicrobial resistance via traditional approaches.

- **Global Traditional Medicine Market** – 200B USD annual market; integrative medicine adoption 50 percent USA populations; herbal medicines 10,000+ species traded globally; Indian companies (Dabur, Baidyanath, Himalaya) exporting 150 countries.
- **Integration Challenges** – Regulatory harmonization (different countries different standards); clinical trials costs 100-200M USD per drug; intellectual property protection (biopiracy concerns); training physicians dual competency (modern plus traditional); insurance coverage reluctance.

Prelims Pointers

- Ministry of Ayush – government ministry for traditional medicine
- Integrative medicine – combining traditional and evidence-based approaches
- Health systems strengthening – improving universal health coverage
- Indigenous knowledge – protecting and promoting traditional wisdom

India International Conference on Democracy & Election Management 2026

Inaugural India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM) 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (Jan 21-23). Three-day conference organized by India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management (IIIDEM). Platform for global election officials and democratic practitioners.

News in Brief

- Inaugural IICDEM 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, January 21-23
- Organized by India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management
- Three-day conference for global democratic practitioners
- Focus on election management and democratic governance

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **IICDEM 2026** – Jan 21-23 2026 Bharat Mandapam New Delhi; inaugural 3-day conference; organized by India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM).
- **IIIDEM** – Est. 2019 by Election Commission of India; HQ New Delhi; research on electoral systems, democracy practices; partnerships with 100+ election commissions worldwide; training programs.
- **Election Commission of India** – Est. 1950; autonomous constitutional body; oversees 1.4B voter elections (Lok Sabha, State, local); largest democratic election conductor; Election Commissioner and 2 members; Rs 50,000 cr budget (major polls).
- **Democratic Practitioners Platform** – IICDEM brings election officials, researchers, civil society; shares best practices on voter registration, inclusivity, technology (EVM security), women participation, minority representation.
- **Global Election Trends** – 2026 expected 70+ elections globally; IICDEM analysis of AI in elections, disinformation, electoral integrity; India experiences with 1.4B voters applicable to emerging democracies.
- **Electoral Technology Innovation** – EVMs (Electronic Voting Machines) used India since 2000; voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) since 2019; AI for voter verification; blockchain potential for ballot security; cybersecurity threats increasing (remote voting risks).
- **Global South Leadership** – IIIDEM positions India as election integrity exemplar; training programs for 50+ developing nations (OAS, AU, ASEAN partnerships); documentation of Indian electoral practices (105 elections successfully conducted 1950-2025, 6.5B votes cast); democratic resilience amid challenges.

Prelims Pointers

- Election Commission of India (ECI) – autonomous constitutional body

- Electoral management – administering elections at all levels
- Democratic participation – ensuring right to vote
- Electoral integrity – preventing fraud and ensuring credibility

International Big Cat Alliance Assembly & Summit Events

International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) First Assembly held in New Delhi. Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav presided. Attended by ministerial delegations from 9 countries. Assembly endorsed S.P. Yadav as IBCA Director General. India-led coalition of 95 range countries.

News in Brief

- IBCA First Assembly held in New Delhi
- Ministerial delegations from 9 countries participated
- S.P. Yadav endorsed as IBCA Director General
- Coalition of 95 range countries for big cat conservation

Static Background – Concepts & Terms

- **IBCA First Assembly** – New Delhi 2023-2024 (formal inaugural); presided by Union Minister Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav; 95 member states ministerial delegations.
- **S.P. Yadav Director General** – Endorsed IBCA DG by First Assembly; former NTCA official; oversees IBCA operations, research coordination, treaty implementation across 97 range countries.
- **IBCA Governance Structure** – Assembly (supreme body, quinquennial), Standing Committee (executive, 15 countries), Secretariat (NTCA Delhi); treaty-based with international legal personality; modeled on CITES, Ramsar conventions.
- **9-Country Ministerial Delegation** – First Assembly attended by ministers from 9 range countries; signifies political commitment; pledges on habitat protection, anti-poaching budgets, community engagement.
- **Treaty Mechanisms** – Species Action Plans (per cat), habitat corridors (e.g., Tiger landscapes Asia), genetic monitoring, capacity-building for veterinarians in developing range countries, conflict mitigation protocols.
- **Funding and Implementation** – IBCA Secretariat 10M USD initial budget (India, France, Germany contributions); donor countries pledging 100M USD over 5 years; transboundary conservation projects approved; ranger training centers 15 countries.
- **Poaching Prevention** – 2,000 rangers deployed across range countries; technology deployment (AI cameras, drones, acoustic monitors); intelligence networks (trafficking route interdiction); conviction rates 50 percent (up from 15 percent 2015).

Prelims Pointers

- IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature
- Transboundary conservation – protecting species across borders
- Protected area networks – coordinated national parks and reserves
- Community-based conservation – involving local populations in protection