

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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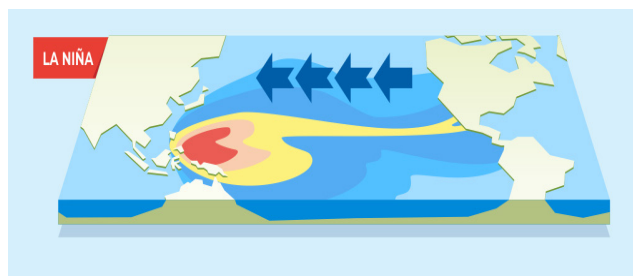
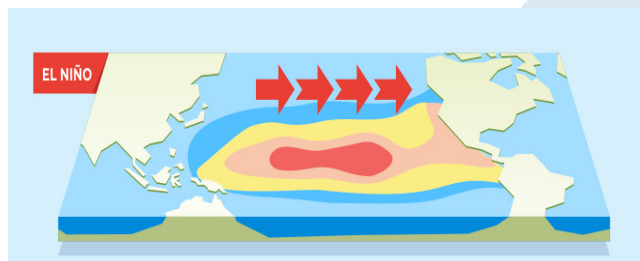
NEUTRAL CONDITIONS TO PREVAIL IN PACIFIC OCEAN: US WEATHER MONITOR

Context

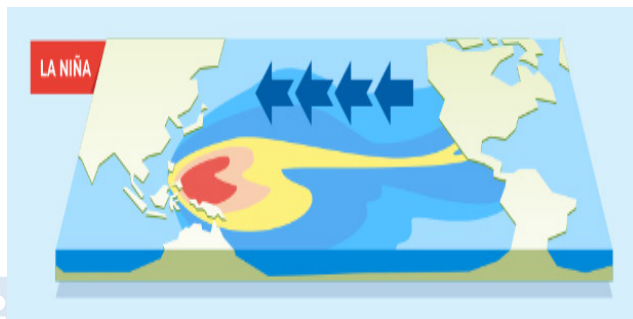
- Recently, the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** has forecasted that neutral conditions will dominate the Pacific Ocean until October 2025.
 - It highlights the absence of **El Niño or La Niña phenomena**, collectively known as the **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**.

About El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

- It is a naturally occurring climate phenomenon resulting from **interactions between the ocean and atmosphere** in the **equatorial Pacific Ocean**. It has three distinct phases:
- El Niño:** It is a naturally occurring climate pattern associated with the **warming of the ocean surface** temperatures in the **central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean**.
 - It occurs irregularly at **two to seven year intervals**.



- La Niña:** It is characterised by cooler than average ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
 - During La Niña events, trade winds are even stronger than usual, pushing more warm water toward Asia.



- Neutral:** Neither El Niño nor La Niña conditions dominate.
 - Neutral conditions occur when sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean remain close to the long-term average.

Key Components of ENSO

El Niño	La Niña	Southern Oscillation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suppresses rainfall in Australia, Indonesia, and India. Increases rainfall and flooding in the southern US and Peru. Typically weakens the Indian Monsoon and increases hurricane activity in the Pacific. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens monsoons in South Asia. Brings drought to the U.S. Southwest. Causes increased Atlantic hurricane activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers to the atmospheric component of ENSO. Measured via the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), which tracks pressure differences between Tahiti and Darwin, Australia.

Recent Trends

- The NOAA report indicates that the short and weak La Niña observed earlier this year has transitioned into neutral conditions.
- Sub-surface temperatures in the Pacific have normalized, signaling the end of La Niña.

Impact on Global Weather

- Global Implications:** Neutral conditions reduce the likelihood of extreme weather events linked

to El Niño or La Niña, such as droughts or floods.

- However, localized weather anomalies may still occur due to other climatic factors.
- India's Southwest Monsoon:** ENSO-neutral conditions are generally associated with normal or above-normal rainfall during India's monsoon season.
 - It is a positive development for agriculture, as nearly 70% of India's annual rainfall occurs between June and September.

Global Impacts of ENSO		
Region	El Niño Effects	La Niña Effects
• India	• Weaker monsoon, droughts	• Stronger monsoon, flooding
• USA	• Wetter South, drier North	• Drier South, colder North
• South America	• Heavy rains and floods (Peru, Ecuador)	• Drier west coast
• Africa	• Drought in southern Africa	• Flooding in parts of East Africa
• Australia	• Droughts and bushfires	• Cooler, wetter weather

Future Outlook

- **Forecast Accuracy:** NOAA predicts a 50% chance of ENSO-neutral conditions persisting through August-October 2025.
 - ♦ IMD is expected to release its **Long Range Forecast** for the monsoon season soon, incorporating these findings.
- **Monitoring ENSO:** Continuous monitoring of sea surface temperatures and atmospheric patterns is essential for early detection of any shifts toward El Niño or La Niña.

Source: IE

PLASTIC PARKS IN INDIA

In News

- The Plastic Parks scheme is promoting industrial growth and environmental sustainability in India's plastics sector.

Plastic Park

- It is an industrial zone specifically **designed for plastic-related businesses and industries**.
- It aims to **consolidate and synergize** the capacities of the plastic processing industry, promoting investment, production, and exports while generating employment.
- These parks also focus on **achieving environmentally sustainable growth** through **waste management** and recycling initiatives.

Importance and Progress

- Plastic Parks have emerged as an integral part of India's strategy for managing **plastic waste**, **promoting recycling**, and **supporting the chemical industry**.
- India ranks **12th globally in plastic exports**, with exports growing from \$8.2 billion in 2014 to \$27 billion in 2022, driven by government efforts like the Plastic Parks scheme.
 - ♦ 10 Plastic Parks have been approved so far in different States.



Existing Issues

- The Indian plastics industry was large but highly fragmented with dominance of tiny, small and medium units and thus lacked the capacity to tap this opportunity.

Governments Efforts

- The Department is implementing a scheme to support setting up need based **Plastic Parks**, with requisite state-of-the-art infrastructure, enabling common facilities through cluster development approach, to consolidate the capacities of the domestic downstream plastic processing industry.
 - ♦ The scheme aims to increase investment, production and export in the plastics sector.
- Under the scheme, the government of India provides grant funding up to 50% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs.40 crore per project.

Conclusion

- The **Plastic Parks concept** is a revolutionary venture aimed at improving the infrastructure of plastic processing in India.
- The Plastic Parks scheme is a strategic initiative to boost India's plastic industry by enhancing

production, exports, and innovation, while ensuring sustainable and environmentally responsible growth.

- As India's global presence in plastic trade grows, the scheme remains vital to ensuring that this growth is sustainable, inclusive, and driven by innovation.

Source: PIB

POWERING INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS REPORT

Context

- NITI Aayog today released a report titled **"Automotive Industry: Powering India's Participation in Global Value Chains"**.

About

- The report offers an **extensive analysis of India's automotive sector**.
- It highlights both **opportunities and challenges** and **outlines a pathway for positioning India as a key player in global automotive markets**.

Major Highlights

- **Global Context & Trends:** Battery manufacturing hubs are emerging in regions like **Europe and the U.S.**, these developments are **altering traditional supply chains** and creating new opportunities for collaboration.
 - ♦ **The rise of Industry 4.0** is transforming automotive manufacturing Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Internet of Things (IoT), and robotics.
 - ♦ These digital advancements are **fostering new business models centered around smart factories and connected vehicles**.
 - ♦ **Semiconductor chip costs per vehicle are expected** to rise from \$600 to \$1,200 by 2030.
- **Global Auto Component Market:** It is valued at **\$2 trillion in 2022; \$700 billion is traded globally**.
 - ♦ **Global automobile production:** Reached approximately 94 million units.
 - ♦ The global market is growing at **4–6% annually due to rising demand**.
- **India's Position:** India has emerged as the **fourth-largest global producer** after **China, USA and Japan**, with an annual production of **nearly six million vehicles**.

- ♦ **The Indian automotive sector** has gained a strong domestic and export market particularly in the **small car and utility vehicle segments**.
- ♦ India is positioning itself as a **hub for automotive manufacturing and exports** with **'Make in India'**.

Challenges

- Despite being the fourth-largest automobile producer globally, **India has a modest share (around 3%) in the global automotive component trade**, which amounts to approximately \$20 billion.
- The bulk of global trade in automotive components is driven by engine components, drive transmission, and steering systems, but **India's share in these high-precision segments remains low at just 2-4%**.
- **India's automotive sector faces challenges** on account of operational cost, infrastructural gaps, moderate GVC integration, inadequate R&D expenditure etc. that hinder its competitiveness in the global value chain (GVC).

Recommendations

- **Operational Expenditure (Opex) Support:** To scale up manufacturing capabilities, with a focus on capital expenditure (Capex) for tooling, dies, and infrastructure.
- **Skill Development:** Initiatives to build a talent pipeline critical for sustaining growth.
- **R&D, Government facilitated IP transfer and Branding:** Providing incentives for research, development, international branding to improve product differentiation and empowering MSMEs through IP transfers.
- **Cluster Development:** Fostering collaboration between firms through common facilities such as R&D and testing centers to strengthen the supply chain.
- **Industry 4.0 Adoption:** Encouraging the integration of digital technologies and enhanced manufacturing standards to improve efficiency.
- **International Collaboration:** Promoting joint ventures (JVs), foreign collaborations, and free trade agreements (FTAs) to expand global market access.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Simplifying regulatory processes, worker hour flexibility, supplier discovery & development and improving business conditions for automotive firms.

Way Ahead

- The report envisions the country's automotive component production growing to **\$145 billion, with exports tripling from \$20 billion to \$60 billion.**
- This growth would lead to a **trade surplus of approximately \$25 billion** and a significant increase in India's share of the global automotive value chain, **from 3% to 8%.**
- Additionally, this growth is expected to generate **2-2.5 million new employment** opportunities.

Conclusion

- India has significant potential to become a global leader in the automotive industry.
- Achieving this goal requires focused efforts from the central and state governments, as well as industry stakeholders.
- By addressing the existing challenges and leveraging the proposed interventions, India can enhance its competitiveness, attract investments, and build a robust automotive sector capable of leading the global value chain.

Source: AIR

INDIA ENDS TRANSSHIPMENT FOR BANGLADESH EXPORTS

Context

- **India has formally revoked the transshipment facility** that allowed Bangladesh to export goods to third countries via Indian land customs stations, ports, and airports.

Transshipment Agreement

- Introduced in **2020** by India's Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the agreement aimed to **enhance regional connectivity and trade cooperation.**
- Under this arrangement, cargo from Bangladesh could pass through **Indian Land Customs Stations (LCSs) en route to ports and airports.**
- This facilitated smoother trade flows for Bangladeshi **exports to regions like Europe, West Asia, and beyond.**

Why was it revoked?

- India cited **logistical challenges** as the primary reason for rescinding the facility.
- The transshipment arrangement led to **'significant congestion'** at Indian airports and ports.

- This congestion resulted in **delays, increased costs, and backlogs** that hindered India's own export processes.
- The move is expected to significantly impact Bangladesh's trade logistics and costs, particularly for exports destined for Western markets.

Highlights of India Bangladesh Relations

- **Independence and Liberation War:** India played a crucial role in Bangladesh's independence in 1971, supporting the Bengali nationalist movement against Pakistan's rule.
 - ♦ This historic event laid the foundation for strong bilateral ties.
- **Land Boundary Agreement (LBA):** In 2015, both countries resolved long-standing border issues by exchanging enclaves and simplifying their international border, which had remained unresolved since partition in 1947.
- **Connectivity:** Five pre-1965 rail links have been rehabilitated between India and Bangladesh. There are currently three railway trains operating between the two countries – Maitri Express ; Bandhan Express ; and Mitali Express.
 - ♦ The inauguration of Akhaura-Agartala cross-border rail link is a crucial step towards enhancing connectivity of northeastern India with Bangladesh.
- **Economic Relations:** Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second biggest trade partner of Bangladesh in Asia.
 - ♦ The total trade turnover in FY24 touched US\$ 12.90 billion.
 - ♦ India's export to Bangladesh stood at US\$ 11.06 billion in FY24.
- **Trade Agreements:** The two countries are members of various regional trade agreements such as the **Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA)**, the **SAARC Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA)** and the **Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)** which govern the tariff regimes for trade.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Both countries are active members of regional organizations like SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), promoting regional integration and cooperation.

- **Various Joint exercises** take place between the two countries:
 - ♦ **Exercise Sampriti** (Army) and
 - ♦ **Exercise Milan** (Navy).
- **In the energy sector**, Bangladesh imports nearly 2,000 megawatts of electricity from India.

Challenges

- **Border Issues:** Although the Land Boundary Agreement in 2015 resolved many longstanding border disputes, there are still occasional issues related to border security and illegal crossings that strain relations.
- **Water Sharing:** Disputes over the sharing of common rivers, such as the Teesta River, remain unresolved.
- **Trade Imbalance:** While trade between India and Bangladesh has grown significantly, there remains a trade imbalance where India exports more to Bangladesh than it imports.
 - ♦ This led to economic tensions and protectionist measures.
- **Cross-Border Migration and Demographic Shifts:** Historical and undocumented migration from Bangladesh to Indian states like Assam and West Bengal remains a politically sensitive issue.
- **Security Concerns:** Issues related to border security, cross-border smuggling, and occasional incidents involving extremist groups pose security challenges for both countries, requiring continued cooperation and vigilance.
- **China's Growing Influence in Bangladesh:** Bangladesh's deepening ties with China, particularly in infrastructure and defense, is a strategic concern for India. India perceives this as a potential dilution of its strategic space.

Way Ahead

- India considers **Bangladesh an important ally in South Asia**, with whom it shares the longest land boundary among all its neighbours.
- Over the years, India and Bangladesh have forged a multifaceted relationship, marked by a shared history, culture, and geographical proximity.
- By fostering dialogue, promoting inclusivity, and diversifying partnerships, they can pave the way for a stronger and more resilient bilateral relationship.

Source: BS

THE MAGIC OF INDIAN SILK

Context

- India's raw silk production increased from 31,906 MT in 2017-18 to **38,913 MT in 2023-24**.

What is Sericulture?

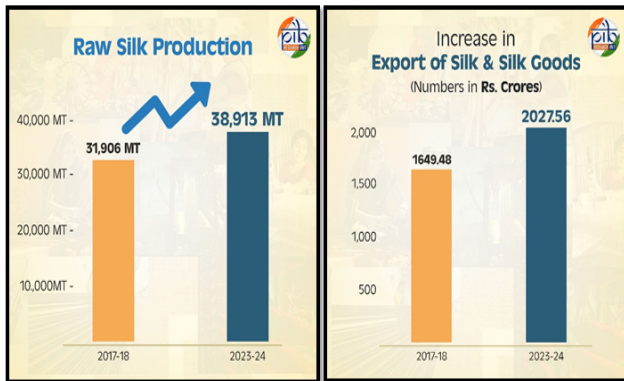
- Sericulture is the process of **farming silkworms to make silk**.
- Silkworms are raised on **mulberry, oak, castor, and arjun leaves**. After about a month, they **spin cocoons**.
- These cocoons are collected and boiled to soften the silk. The silk threads are then pulled out, twisted into yarn, and woven into fabric.

Life Cycle of Moth



Silk Production in India

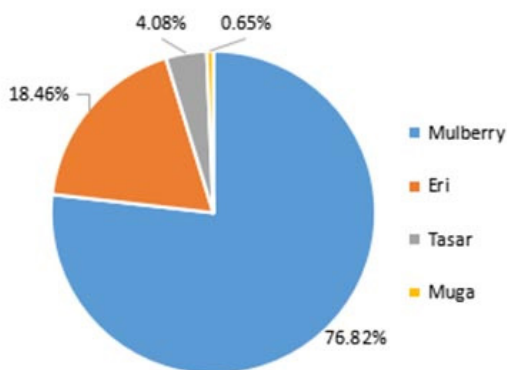
- India is the **second-largest producer and consumer** of silk globally.
- Silk accounts for only **0.2 %** of the world's total textile production.
- India produces four types of natural silks; **Mulberry, Eri, Tasar and Muga**.
- **Silk producing states:** **Karnataka** is the largest silk-producing state in India, followed by **Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Exports of silk** and silk goods rose from 1,649.48 crores in 2017-18 to **₹2,027.56 crores in 2023-24**.
- As per Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIIS) reports, the **country exported 3348 MT of silk waste in 2023-24**.
 - ♦ **Silk waste** consists of leftover or imperfect silk from the production process, such as broken fibers or pieces of cocoons.



Mulberry Vs Non-mulberry silk

- **Mulberry silk** comes from silkworms that eat only mulberry leaves.
 - ♦ It is **soft, smooth, and shiny with a bright glow**, making it perfect for luxury sarees and high-end fabrics.
 - ♦ **92%** of the country's total raw silk production comes from mulberry.
- **Non-mulberry silk** (also known as Vanya silk) comes from wild silkworms that feed on leaves from trees like oak, castor and arjun.
 - ♦ This silk has a natural, earthy feel with less shine but is strong, durable, and eco-friendly.

Share of silk type in India's total silk production (2023-24)



Source: Central Silk Board of India, Ministry of Textiles

Government Initiatives in Silk Development

- **The Silk Samagra Scheme:** Its objective is to scale up production by improving the quality and productivity and to empower downtrodden, poor & backward families through various activities of sericulture in the country. It has **four major Components:**
 - ♦ Research & Development, Training, Transfer of Technology and I.T. Initiatives,
 - ♦ Seed Organizations,

- ♦ Coordination and Market Development and
- ♦ Quality Certification Systems (QCS) / Export Brand Promotion and Technology Up-gradation.
- **Sericulture Development in the North-Eastern States (NERTPS):** The objective of this scheme was the revival, expansion, and diversification of sericulture in the state with a special focus on **Eri and Muga silks**.

The Indian Silk Export Promotion Council (ISEPC)

- Sponsored by the **Ministry of Textiles**, Government of India, the ISEPC is an apex body of the **exporters, manufacturers and merchandisers**.
- The main activities of the council are to explore markets, **establish contacts with potential buyers**, organize buyer-seller meets, **silk fairs, and exhibitions, resolve trade disputes**, and promote and develop the Indian silk industry and exports.

Source: PIB

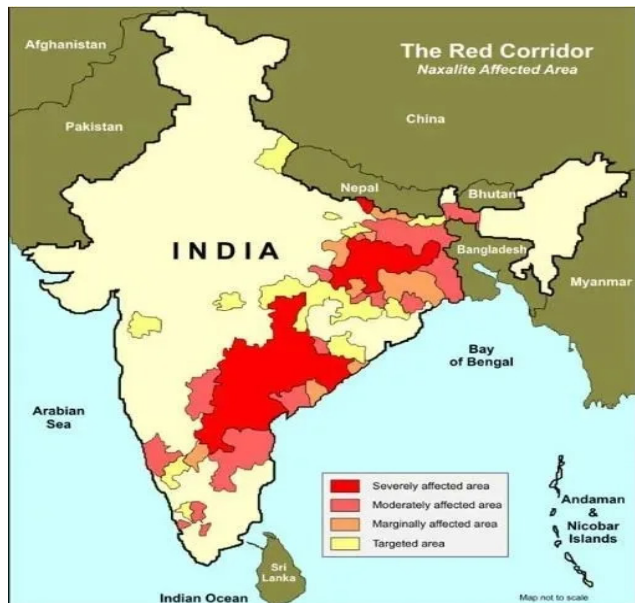
NAXALMUKT BHARAT ABHIYAN: FROM RED ZONES TO GROWTH CORRIDORS

Context

- India has made significant strides in curbing Left Wing Extremism, with a sharp decline in affected districts, violence, and Naxalite presence.

What is the Naxalite Movement?

- **Origin:** The Naxalite movement began in **1967 in Naxalbari, West Bengal**, as a radical leftist uprising championing the rights of tribal and landless communities.
- **Geographic Spread:** The insurgency spread across the so-called **Red Corridor**, covering parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, and Kerala.
- **Approach adopted:** Naxalites employ **guerrilla warfare**, target state institutions, extort local populations, and often recruit children.
 - ♦ They claim to fight for marginalized communities but resort to violent methods.

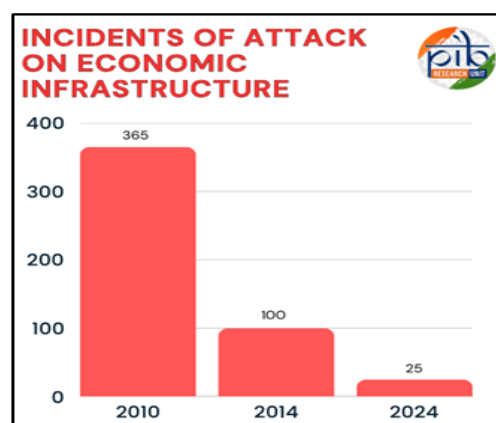
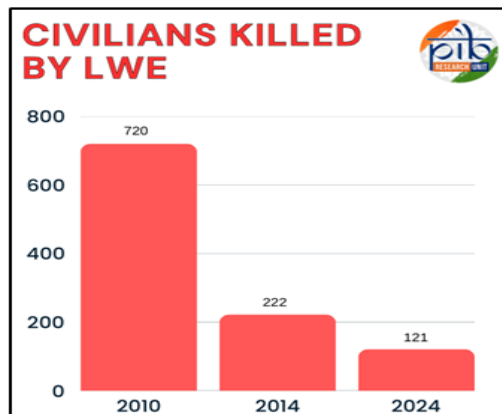


Consequences of Naxalism

- **Political Consequences:** It undermines state authority and weakens democratic institutions in affected areas.
 - ♦ It also creates governance vacuums, making administration and law enforcement extremely difficult.
- **Economic Consequences:** Naxalism disrupts economic activities like agriculture, and infrastructure development.
 - ♦ Increases government spending on security, reducing funds available for development and hampers private investment.
- **Social Consequences:** It fosters fear, mistrust, and a sense of alienation among marginalized communities.
 - ♦ The disruption of education and health services, especially in remote areas, leads to significant human development losses.

Improvement in India's Fight Against Naxalism

- **Reduction in Affected Districts** from 126 in 2010 to just 38 in 2024, showing successful containment of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) zones.
- **Drop in Violence:** LWE-related violent incidents have dropped by 81%, from 1,936 in 2010 to 374 in 2024.
- **Reintegration into the Mainstream:** LWE-affected areas are increasingly experiencing improved education, healthcare, connectivity, and governance.
 - ♦ Over 8,000 Naxalites have surrendered in the last 10 years.



Government Initiatives

- **Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme:** This Scheme is being implemented as a sub-scheme of the umbrella scheme 'Modernization of Police Forces'.
 - ♦ The Central Government reimburses security related expenditure for LWE affected districts and districts earmarked for monitoring.
- **SAMADHAN Strategy:** A comprehensive approach involving Smart Leadership, Aggressive Strategy, Motivation and Training, Actionable Intelligence, Dashboard-Based KPIs and KRAs, Harnessing Technology, Action Plans for each Theatre, and No Access to Financing.
- **Scheme of Fortified Police stations:** 612 Fortified Police Stations have been constructed in LWE affected areas in the last 10 years.
- **Aspirational District:** The Ministry of Home Affairs has been tasked with the monitoring of Aspirational districts programme in 35 LWE affected districts.
- **Focused Developmental Assistance:** Special Central Assistance (SCA) of ₹30 crore for most affected districts and ₹10 crore for Districts of Concern is bridging infrastructure gaps.

Way Ahead

- **Community Engagement:** Promote confidence-building measures and empower tribal institutions.
- **Employment and Education:** Provide youth with skills, education, and job opportunities to break the recruitment chain.
- **Technological Integration:** Enhance intelligence, surveillance, and communication using modern technology.

Concluding remarks

- The Government of India has set a target to eliminate Naxalism by **31st March 2026**, recognizing it as a major impediment to the development of tribal and remote regions.
- The success of Naxalmukt Bharat Abhiyan lies in balancing robust security with inclusive development.
- With continued political will, administrative efficiency, and local participation, a future free from Left Wing Extremism is within reach.

Source: PIB

violence, and spiritual harmony through the collective chanting of the **Navkar Mantra - the most revered prayer in Jainism.**

- **The mantra venerates the five supreme beings:** Arihants, Siddhas, Acharyas, Upadhyayas, and all Sadhus, personifying the core values of Jain philosophy.
- The day is observed by **mass chanting sessions**, both in-person and virtual.

Jainism

- It is a spiritual path focused on **non-violence, truth, self-discipline, and the pursuit of liberation (moksha)** through personal effort.
- **The word Jaina** is derived from a **Sanskrit word jina**, meaning the '**conqueror**', i.e., conqueror of passion and desire.
- **The last tirthankara, Mahavir** is called Jina as he conquered his passion after the attainment of the supreme realisation
- **Jainism later split into two sects:** Digambaras (sky-clad) and Svetambaras (white-clad).
- **Kings like Bimbisara and Ajatsatru** adopted Jainism, and Jain art, architecture, and literature flourished under their patronage.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT**NAVKAR MAHAMANTRA DIVAS****Context**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and participated in **Navkar Mahamantra Divas.**

About

- The Prime Minister proposed **nine resolutions anchored in the Navkar Mantra**, each a commitment to knowledge, action, harmony, and rooted progress.
 - ♦ Saving water,
 - ♦ planting a tree in one's mother's name,
 - ♦ promoting cleanliness,
 - ♦ being vocal for local products,
 - ♦ fostering a sense of national pride through 'Desh Darshan,'
 - ♦ adopting natural farming practices,
 - ♦ embracing a healthy lifestyle,
 - ♦ encouraging yoga and participation in sports,
 - ♦ and helping the poor.

What Is Vishwa Navkar Mahamantra Divas?

- It is an annual event observed on **April 9**, dedicated to **promoting global peace, non-**

DR CONGO**Context**

- The UN condemned the widespread rape of children in eastern DR Congo, where thousands faced sexual violence in early 2025.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

- It is a country located in Central Africa. It is the second-largest country in Africa by land area
- Kinshasa is the capital city, located on the Congo River, and is one of the largest urban areas in Africa.



- **Bordering countries :** Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.
- It is endowed with exceptional natural resources, including minerals such as cobalt and copper, hydroelectric potential, significant arable land, immense biodiversity and the world's second largest rainforest.

Source :TH

ODISHA TO LAUNCH UNIFIED HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME

Context

- The Odisha government launched a unified health coverage scheme combining Ayushman Bharat and 'Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana'.

About

- The scheme will provide health coverage of **5 lakh rupees** per family per annum, with an additional **5 lakh rupees for women members**.
- Under the **Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana**, all persons **aged 70 years and above**, regardless of income, will be eligible for coverage.

Ayushman Bharat Scheme

- It was launched in **2018**, by the Government of India with the aim of achieving universal health coverage. It has two key components;
- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri- Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)
- Ayushman Arogya Mandir

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri- Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)

- **AB PM-JAY** is the largest publicly funded health assurance scheme in the world which provides health cover of **Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year** for **secondary** and **tertiary care** hospitalization.
- **Coverage:** It covers up to **3 days** of pre-hospitalization and **15 days** of post-hospitalization expenses such as **diagnostics and medicines**.
 - ♦ The beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment.
 - ♦ There is **no restriction** on the **family size, age or gender**.

- **Eligibility:** The inclusion of households is based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas, respectively.
- This number also includes families that were covered in the **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY)** but were not present in the **SECC 2011** database. **Funding:** The funding for the scheme is shared by the Centre and the state in a **60:40 ratio**.
 - ♦ However, for North-Eastern states, Himalayan states (such as Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh), and Union Territories, the **ratio is 90:10**.

Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana 2025

- The scheme provides Healthcare facilities to the citizens of Odisha state who cannot afford it.
 - ♦ All state citizens selected under the scheme will receive free healthcare of up to **INR 5 lakh in rural areas** and **INR 6 lakh in urban areas**.

Source: AIR

MAURITIUS SIGNED ISA'S COUNTRY PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Context

- **Mauritius** has become the **first African** country to sign a Country Partnership Framework (CPF) with the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.

About

- It is also the **fourth country globally**, after Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Cuba, to **sign the CPF**.
 - ♦ This partnership **aims to provide a structured approach** for collaboration between ISA and Mauritius on solar energy initiatives, aligning with the country's national priorities.
- The CPF is a strategic initiative developed by ISA to **facilitate long- and medium-term cooperation with its member countries**.

The International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, launched in **2015 by India and France at the COP21 summit**.
- **Aim:** Promoting solar energy as a sustainable solution for energy access and climate change, with the goal of **mobilizing USD 1 trillion in solar investments by 2030**.

- **Members:** Currently, 100+ countries are signatories, with 90+ countries having ratified to become full members.
 - ♦ Initially focused on developing countries, the ISA's Framework Agreement **was amended in 2020 to allow all United Nations member states to join.**
- **Headquartered** in **Gurugram** India, the ISA is the first international organization established in the country.

Source: AIR

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT SCHEME

Context

- UTs with legislatures – Delhi, J&K, Puducherry – are now included under the **‘Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment’** scheme, launched in 2020-21.

Scheme Highlights:

- Under this scheme, **the Central government provides financial assistance to states** in the form of a **50-year interest-free loan** for **capital investment projects**.
 - ♦ Provisions are made for **infrastructure projects** like roads, flyovers, bridges, hospital buildings, development of tourism sectors and other capital projects.
- It was launched considering the **tough fiscal environment** faced by the State Governments **due to COVID-19 pandemic**.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Finance.
- The Scheme was continued in financial years **2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 and further in FY 2024-25.**

Source: IE

INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP)

Context

- **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** grew at its slowest rate in six months, clocking a pace of **2.9%** in February 2025.

Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- The IIP is an index which shows the **growth rates in different industry groups of the economy** in a stipulated period of time.

- It is a composite indicator that **measures the growth rate of industry groups** classified under:

- ♦ **Broad sectors:** Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity.
- ♦ **Use-based sectors:** Basic Goods, Capital Goods, and Intermediate Goods.

- **Released by:** The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

- **Base year:** 2011-2012

- **Periodicity:** Monthly basis

Source: TH

KAVACH 5.0 SYSTEM

In News

- The Ministry of Railways announced the implementation of **Kavach 5.0** to enhance Mumbai's suburban train services.

Kavach System

- Indian Railways has indigenously developed an automatic train protection system rechristened as **‘Kavach’** (Train Collision Avoidance System), to prevent accidents due to human error resulting in **Signal Passing** at danger and **over-speeding**.
- It is a highly technology intensive system, which requires **safety certification of highest order (SIL-4)**.
- It aids the loco pilot in trains running within specified speed limits by automatic application of brakes in case Loco Pilot fails to do so and helps the train safely run during inclement weather.

Progress

- The first field trials on the passenger trains were started in February **2016**.
- Based on the experience gained and Independent Safety Assessment of the system by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA), three firms were approved in 2018-19, for supply of Kavach Version 3.2.
 - ♦ Kavach was adopted as the **National Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system in July 2020.**
- Kavach version 4.0 covers all the major features required for the diverse railway network

Kavach 5.0

- It is an upgraded Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system which is designed specifically for Mumbai and will be completed by December

2025 .

- It is expected to **increase train frequency by 30%** by reducing the gap between trains.
 - ♦ This aims to accommodate the 80 lakh daily commuters more comfortably.

Source :IE

'GAURAV' (BOMB)

In News

- DRDO successfully conducted the Release Trials of **Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav'** from the Su-30 MKI aircraft.

Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav'

- LRGB 'Gaurav' is a 1,000 kg class glide bomb. It is a precision-guided, long-range glide bomb developed to strike land targets from stand-off distances, i.e., beyond enemy air defence range.
- It is designed and developed indigenously by Research Centre Imarat, Armament Research and Development Establishment and Integrated Test Range, Chandipur.
- The trials successfully demonstrated a range close to 100 kms with pin-point accuracy. The stated range capability is between 30 km and 150 km.
- **Importance:** The development of LRGB will further enhance the capabilities of the Armed Forces to a great extent.

Source :PIB

MALABAR GREY HORNBILL (OCYCEROS GRISEUS)

Context

- A team of researchers from Kerala has been awarded the Future Conservationist Award by the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) for their project on conserving the Malabar Grey Hornbill.

About

- The Malabar grey hornbill is a keystone species, **endemic to the Western Ghats** in India.
- **Physical characteristics:** The bird is characterized by its **large, curved bill**, lack of a prominent casque (horn-like structure), and **grey plumage**.
 - ♦ It's known for its **loud and distinctive calls**.
- **Habitat:** Found in evergreen forests, plantations (coffee, rubber, arecanut), and other modified habitats.
 - ♦ Some specific locations include **Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Anamalai Tiger Reserve, and Dandeli National Park**.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - ♦ **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable (VU)
 - ♦ **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (India):** Schedule I



Source: TH

