

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 15-07-2025

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BOMBAY HIGH COURT FLAGS MISUSE OF MATRIMONIAL LAWS

Context

- The Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court quashed a criminal case of cruelty, unnatural sex, and dowry harassment, stating that marriage is a sacred institution and should not be turned into prolonged, unproductive legal battles.

How Matrimonial Laws Are Being Misused?

- Section 498A of the IPC (Cruelty by husband or his relatives):** Often used to implicate multiple family members, sometimes even distant relatives, without solid evidence.
- Section 377 of IPC (Unnatural offences):** Sometimes used strategically in marital disputes to exert pressure.
- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:** While dowry is a persistent issue, false allegations under this Act are sometimes made to gain leverage in divorce or property settlement cases.
- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:** Misuse involves exaggerated or false claims of mental and physical cruelty.

Committees Highlighting Misuse of Laws

- The Malimath Committee, in its 2003 report on Criminal Justice Reforms,** recommended making Section 498A bailable and compoundable, citing its misuse.
- The 243rd Report of the Law Commission of India (2012)** recognized misuse but cautioned against diluting women's protections. Recommended balancing safeguards with protections.
- National Commission for Women (NCW):** While supporting strict action against genuine cases, NCW has also acknowledged the misuse and advocated for better investigation before arrests.

Consequences of Misuse of Matrimonial Laws

- Psychological Trauma and Harassment:** Innocent family members suffer immense emotional stress. Allegations, even if proven false later, carry a social stigma that is hard to erase.
- Burdening the Legal System:** False or frivolous cases overload police stations and courts, delaying justice for genuine victims.
- Erosion of Marital Institution:** Frequent misuse may reduce marriage to a battleground, deterring

people from entering into it or resolving conflicts amicably.

- Violation of Fundamental Rights:** Unjustified arrests and prolonged trials affect the right to life and liberty under **Article 21** of the Constitution.

Key Judicial Observations and Precedents

- Gian Singh v. State of Punjab, 2012:** The Supreme Court ruled that courts can quash criminal proceedings in matrimonial disputes where parties have settled.
- Narinder Singh v. State of Punjab, 2014:** Laid down principles for quashing proceedings if the offences are personal in nature and not affecting public interest.
- Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar, 2014:** The Supreme Court limited automatic arrests under Section 498A and called for adherence to procedural safeguards.

Steps Taken by the Government

- Advisory by Ministry of Home Affairs (2015):** Directed state police to avoid automatic arrests under 498A without preliminary inquiry.
- CrPC Amendment (2023):** Provided stricter norms for arrests in matrimonial cases.
- Family Counselling Centres and Mediation Cells:** Set up at district courts to encourage reconciliation.
- Faster Court Proceedings:** Special family courts have been empowered to handle sensitive cases promptly.

Way Ahead

- Balanced Legal Reform:** Make certain sections (like 498A) compoundable with court permission and ensure **gender-neutral provisions** where appropriate.
- Pre-FIR Mediation:** Introduce mandatory cooling-off periods and mediation before filing criminal cases in matrimonial disputes.
- Judicial Sensitisation:** Continuous training for judges to differentiate between genuine and malicious cases.
- Penalty for False Complaints:** Provision for penal action under **IPC Section 211** (false charge) should be invoked where appropriate.
- Strengthen Legal Aid and Awareness:** Legal literacy campaigns should inform both men and women of their rights and responsibilities.

Source: TH

DOWRY DEATHS IN INDIA: LONG INVESTIGATIONS, RARE CONVICTIONS

Context

- Despite decades of legislation and activism, dowry continues to claim lives, particularly among young married women.

About Dowry

- The **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961** defines dowry as *'any property or valued security given or agreed to be given, directly or indirectly, to either partner in a marriage, to the other party's parents, to any other person, is referred to as dowry'*.
- Dowry-related violence and deaths are symptoms of **deep-rooted patriarchy**, and remains one of the most persistent forms of gender-based crimes in India.
 - In many cases, women are subjected to mental and physical abuse, culminating in suicide or murder — often by burning, poisoning, or hanging.

Dowry Death in India: Current Statistics

- High-Burden States:** According to **NCRB data for 2022**, 6,450 dowry deaths were registered across India;

Dowry Deaths in India NCRB 2022 Snapshot

↑ National Overview



Total Dowry Deaths **6,450** cases



Daily Average: ~18 women die every day due to dowry-related violence



Cases under Dowry Prohibition Act **13,479** registered

📍 Top 5 States by Dowry Deaths



Uttar Pradesh	2,218
Bihar	1,057
Madhya Pradesh	518
West Bengal	472
Rajasthan	320+

⚖️ Judicial Outcomes



359 cases closed due to insufficient evidence



4,148 cases charge-sheeted



Conviction rate: **30%** (approximate)

- Uttar Pradesh (**highest**), Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Haryana together contributed **80%** of all dowry death cases.

- From NCW's 2024 complaint data:** 4,383 cases of dowry harassment (17% of total complaints): 292 cases of dowry deaths.
 - Over **60%** of dowry murders occurred in **West Bengal, Odisha, and Bihar**.
- Cities with Highest Cases:** Delhi alone accounted for **30%** of all dowry death cases among India's 19 major cities.
 - Other high-reporting cities include Kanpur, Bengaluru, Lucknow, and Patna.

Causes Behind Dowry Deaths

- Cultural Acceptance:** Dowry is still seen as a customary obligation, especially in arranged marriages.
- Economic Exploitation:** Dowry is often used to secure financial gain or status for the groom's family.
- Gender Inequality:** Women are viewed as financial burdens, leading to coercive demands and abuse.
 - Districts with skewed sex ratios show higher dowry death rates (**Sex ratio imbalance**).
- Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness:** Many women are unaware of their legal rights or fear retaliation (**Lower levels correlate with increased vulnerability**).
- Delayed Justice:** Investigations are often slow, and convictions rare, weakening deterrence.
- Caste and kinship structures:** Hypergamy and patrilocality intensify dowry pressures.

Key Concerns & Issues

- Policing and Investigations:** Of the **7,000** yearly cases, **only 4,500** were charge-sheeted.
 - Many cases were dropped due to reasons like **'insufficient evidence', 'false complaints', or 'misunderstanding'**.
 - By the end of 2022, **67% of pending dowry death investigations** had been stalled for over **six months**.
- Delay in Charges and Trials:** In 2022, **70% of the charge-sheets** were filed **after two months or more**, showing procedural inefficiencies.
 - From **6,500 trials initiated annually**, **only around 100** led to convictions.
 - Over 90%** of cases remain **pending** in courts.
 - Acquittals, plea bargains, and withdrawn complaints account for a large number of unresolved cases.

Key Legal Provisions

- **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:** Criminalizes giving or receiving dowry.
- **Section 113B of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872** (replaced by the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023): Presumes dowry death if it occurs within 7 years of marriage and is preceded by harassment.
- **Section 80 of the BNS** (formerly IPC Section 304B): It defines dowry death and mandates punishment of 7 years to life imprisonment.
- **Section 85 BNS** (formerly Section 498A IPC): It deals with cruelty against married women, and penalizes cruelty by husband or relatives.

Judicial Interventions: Landmark Judgments

- **Sanjay Kumar Jain v. State of Delhi (2011):** Supreme Court condemned dowry deaths as a 'curse on society'.
- **State of Haryana v. Satbir Singh (2021):** Expanded the scope of cruelty to include indirect evidence.
- **Rajesh Sharma v. State of U.P. (2017):** Introduced safeguards to prevent misuse of Section 498A.

Way Forward

- Strengthen forensic and investigative protocols;
- Establish fast-track courts for dowry-related cases;
- Promote legal literacy and community vigilance;
- Encourage economic empowerment and education for women;
- Support victim protection mechanisms and whistleblower safeguards;

Source: TH

APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS

In News

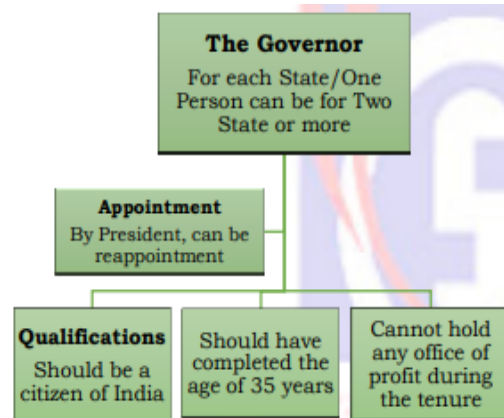
- Kavinder Gupta (former Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir) has been appointed Lieutenant **Governor** of Ladakh, replacing Brig. (retd.) B.D. Mishra

Other related Appointments

- Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju, a senior TDP leader and former Civil Aviation Minister, has been appointed Governor of Goa, succeeding P.S. Sreedharan Pillai.
- Ashim Kumar Ghosh, a senior BJP leader from West Bengal, has been appointed Governor of Haryana, replacing Bandaru Dattatreya.

Governor : Appointment and Eligibility

- The **Governor** is the constitutional head of a State and acts as a link between the **Union and the State governments**.



- **Article 153** provides that each State shall have a Governor, and the same person can be appointed for more than one State.
- The Governor is **appointed by the President (Article 155)** and holds office **during the President's pleasure**, though his tenure is generally five years (**Article 156**).
- **Eligibility** : To be eligible, one must be an Indian citizen aged 35 or above (**Article 157**), and cannot be a member of Parliament or a State Legislature, nor hold any other office of profit (**Article 158**).

Power and Functions

- **As per Article 154**, the **executive powers** of the State are vested in the Governor and exercised according to the Constitution.
 - ♦ He/she appoints the Chief Minister, and on the Chief Minister's advice, appoints the Council of Ministers and allocates their portfolios.
 - ♦ The Governor also appoints the Advocate-General, and the Chairman and members of the State Public Service Commission.
 - ♦ Additionally, the Governor appoints judges of subordinate courts and is consulted in the appointment of High Court judges by the President.
- **Legislative:** The Governor is an integral part of the State Legislature, holding several legislative powers.
 - ♦ Governors may summon, prorogue, or dissolve the Legislature (**Article 174**), address or send messages to the House (**Article 175**), and must deliver a special address at the start of the first session each year or after general elections (**Article 176**).

- ♦ For any bill to become law, the Governor's assent is essential; he/she can approve, withhold, return it for reconsideration, or reserve it for the President. During the Legislature's recess, the Governor can issue ordinances, which must be approved within six weeks of the Assembly's reconvening.
- **Financial Powers:** The Governor has key financial powers in the State: no money bill can be introduced in the Legislative Assembly without prior permission
 - ♦ The annual and supplementary budgets are presented in the Governor's name; and the Governor controls the State Contingency Fund.
- **Judicial:** The Governor has the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites, remission, or to suspend, remit, or commute sentences of persons convicted under laws related to the State's executive powers (**Article 161**).

Source :TH

CORPORATE INVESTMENT LAGGING BEHIND

Context

- **The Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI)** released the monthly growth rate of the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**, which has slowed to a **nine month low of 1.2%**.

Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- It is one of the prime indicators of economic development for the measurement of trends in the **behavior of Industrial Production** over a period of time with reference to a chosen base year.
 - ♦ It indicates the **relative change of physical production** in the field of industries during a specified year as compared to previous year.
- **Released by:** National Statistical Office (NSO).
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- **Frequency:** Monthly.
- **Base Year (as of now):** 2011–12.
- **IIP is composed of three broad sectors:**
 - ♦ Manufacturing (77.6% weight);
 - ♦ Mining (14.4% weight);
 - ♦ Electricity (8.0% weight).
- **Another classification is based on the use of goods, which includes:** Primary Goods, Capital

Goods, Intermediate Goods, Infrastructure/Construction Goods, Consumer Durables and Consumer Non-Durables.

Why has Investment not Picked Up?

- **Demand Uncertainty:** Weak consumer demand since the COVID-19 pandemic has led to lower capacity utilization.
 - ♦ Companies are reluctant to invest in new capacities without clear signals of sustained demand growth.
- **Excess Capacity in Industry:** Many sectors, especially manufacturing, are still operating below optimal capacity.
 - ♦ Firms prefer to use existing infrastructure fully before committing fresh capital.
- **Global Economic Uncertainty:** Geopolitical tensions (e.g., Russia-Ukraine war, Red Sea crisis, global inflation) have impacted trade and investor confidence.
 - ♦ Uncertainty in major economies affects India's exports and investor sentiments.
- **Slow Credit Transmission:** Even though repo rates were low post-COVID, credit growth to industry remained muted until recently.
 - ♦ Banks preferred retail lending (like housing and auto loans) over riskier industrial lending.
- **Infrastructure and Logistics Bottlenecks:** While improvements are ongoing (e.g., Gati Shakti, PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan), logistics costs in India remain high.
 - ♦ Delays in project clearances and land acquisition slow down capital formation.
- **Low FDI in Key Sectors:** FDI inflow is high in digital and services sectors but weak in manufacturing and infrastructure.
 - ♦ Despite the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, foreign players remain cautious due to concerns over market scale, ease of doing business, and exit options.
- **Delayed Government Capex Multiplier:** While public investment (especially in infrastructure) has increased, the crowding-in effect on private investment is yet to fully materialize.
 - ♦ State-level capex has also remained weak due to fiscal constraints.

Policy Measures Taken

- **Corporate Tax Cut (2019):** Reduced from 30% to 22%, aimed at boosting private sector profitability and investments.

- **Capex Push:** Government increased spending on infrastructure in recent budgets to stimulate demand and crowd-in private investment.
- **Monetary Easing:** RBI reduced interest rates to lower borrowing costs and improve liquidity.

Conclusion

- India's industrial and investment slowdown is rooted in demand-side weakness, not merely supply or financial constraints.
- The private sector awaits demand visibility, and investment cannot precede demand recovery.
- A coordinated policy approach, grounded in macro demand management, is needed — beyond tax cuts and interest rate tweaks.

Source: TH

SCIENTISTS FIND PHEROMONE THAT CAUSES LOCUSTS TO SWARM

Context

- Researchers have shown that it's possible to manipulate **pheromones released by locusts** to **prevent them from swarming** or engaging in group behaviour that leads to the **feeding frenzy**.

About

- Locust swarms have historically caused **massive damage to agriculture across regions**.
 - ♦ They collect in large swarms and eat through thousands of hectares of crops in a matter of days.
- The **2019–2020 outbreak** in East Africa, Pakistan, and India was the worst in 25 years.
- **Traditional control methods** use synthetic pesticides, which harm the environment, soil health, and food security.
 - ♦ **Thus finding suitable, eco-friendly alternatives** to pesticides has been an active area of research.

Locusts

- Locusts are the **short-horned grasshoppers** with **highly migratory habits**.
- Locusts can change from a **solitary phase to a gregarious phase**, where they form dense swarms that can **travel hundreds of kilometers** in search of food.
- **Only four species** viz. Desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*), Migratory locust (*Locusta migratoria*), Bombay Locust (*Nomadacris succincta*) and Tree locust (*Anacridium sp.*) are found in India.

- ♦ **The desert locust** is the most important pest species in India as well as in intercontinental context.
- **Concern:** They cause great devastation to natural and cultivated vegetation leading to national emergency of food and fodder.

Gregariousness Behaviour

- Several animal, bird, and insect species — including locusts — **exhibit a social behaviour called gregariousness**.
 - ♦ It helps them **form societies** in which large numbers of individuals work together, instead of competing, in order to survive.
- Scientists have identified a pheromone of interest, called **4-vinylanisole (4VA)**, in 2020.
 - ♦ **Pheromones** are **chemical substances** secreted by an organism that elicit a **social response** in other members of the same species.
 - ♦ After a locust eats food, it often **emits** large quantities of 4VA from its hind legs, it promptly begins to **attract other members** of the species when it's released into the air.
 - ♦ Other locusts nearby subsequently collect together and rub their hind legs against each other.
 - ♦ This in turn triggers the **release of serotonin**, a neurotransmitter, **which leads to swarming**.
- In the new study, the researchers figured that **preventing locusts from releasing 4VA** could potentially **prevent swarming**, so they set to work on understanding its production.

Study also proposed a five-step locust control strategy

- using synthetic or other 4VA substitutes to attract locusts to a trapping area, where they can be killed by fungal pathogens or pesticides at a small scale;
- spraying 4VA to prevent aggregation;
- monitoring population dynamics by tracking 4VA signatures;
- releasing genetically modified locusts into the field to establish non-gregarious populations;
- and using the combined strategy of small-molecule regulators in conjunction with biopesticides.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

MACHILIPATNAM: REAWAKENING OF AN ANCIENT PORT

Context

- Machilipatnam (Masulipatnam), a historic port town is witnessing a revival.

Machilipatnam in Ancient India

- Machilipatnam (Masulipatnam), is a historic port town at the mouth of the **Krishna River** on the Bay of Bengal.
- Early Maritime Significance:**
 - The region was known as **Masulipatnam or Maisolos** (as per **Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, 1st century CE**), and it flourished as an ancient seaport on the Coromandel Coast.
 - It served as a gateway to the Deccan, facilitating trade with **Roman, Arab, and Southeast Asian traders**.
- Satavahana Period:**
 - Under the Satavahanas (1st century BCE to 3rd century CE)**, Masulipatnam emerged as a vibrant port for the **export of muslin, spices, pearls, and textiles**.
 - It was linked to inland cities like **Amaravati and Dharanikota**, which were major centres of Buddhism and commerce.
- Medieval and Colonial Revival:**
 - In the **16th to 18th centuries**, the port regained prominence under the Golconda Sultanate.
 - It became a key trading post for the **Dutch, British, and French East India Companies**, however shifted focus to Madras (Chennai) in the 18th century, diminishing Machilipatnam's importance.

Port Cities of Ancient India

Port City	Dynasty/Period
Lothal (Gujarat)	Indus Valley Civilization
Arikamedu (Puducherry)	Cholas and early Tamil kingdoms
Kaveripattinam (Tamil Nadu)	Cholas
Sopara (Maharashtra)	Satavahanas
Tamralipta (West Bengal)	Mauryas and Guptas

Barygaza (Bharuch)

Indo-Greek and Kushan periods

Source: TH

BEHDEINKHLAM FESTIVAL

Context

- The sacred Behdeinkhlam Festival was celebrated in **Jowai, Meghalaya**.

The Behdienkhlam Festival

- Meaning:** The word Behdeinkhlam means "driving away the plague", referring to expelling diseases like **cholera** and other evils from society.
- Timing:** It is held **annually in July**, after the sowing season, symbolizing a prayer for a good harvest and protection from illness.
- It is predominantly celebrated** by the **Pnars**, a sub-tribe of the **Jaintia** ethnic group in Meghalaya.
- Preservation of Indigenous Faith:** The festival is an important means to preserve the **Niamtre** religion.

Rituals and Celebrations

- The Rituals span **three days**. The **men perform the dances** and rituals and the women prepare and offer sacrificial food to the spirits of their ancestors, a vital ceremonial role.
- The '**Symbud Khnong**' (sacred wooden post) is carried around the town and installed symbolically as a protection against evil spirits.
- A unique football-like game, **Dad-lawakor**, is played at **Mynthong**.
- In recent years, messages against **drug abuse, alcoholism, and climate change** have been promoted during the celebrations.

Source: AIR

PRADHAN MANTRI DIVYASHA KENDRA

Context

- The Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, is set to inaugurate the **75th Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendra (PMDK) at Uttar Pradesh**.

About

- PMDK is a **unique initiative** aimed at providing **integrated services under one roof**—including assessment, evaluation, counselling, distribution, and post-distribution care—for eligible Divyangjan and elderly beneficiaries.

- With the launch of this centre, the total number of operational PMDKs across India **reaches 75**.

Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendra

- It is a government-run initiative established to provide **comprehensive rehabilitation and assistive services to:**
 - ♦ Persons with disabilities (Divyangjan), and
 - ♦ Senior citizens in need of mobility or sensory support.
- The centres function under the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**, and are implemented by **ALIMCO** (Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India), a central public sector enterprise.
- **Target Groups:** Persons with disabilities (PwDs), identified under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
 - ♦ **Senior citizens:** Particularly those belonging to economically weaker sections (EWS).

Source: **PIB**

GOVERNMENT ORDER ON DISPLAYING SUGAR AND FAT BOARDS IN OFFICES

Context

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has directed all Central and State government offices to display **'Sugar and Fat Boards'** — visual informational panels highlighting the sugar and fat content of food items sold in office premises.

About the Initiative

- The measure, supported by the **Indian Council of Medical Research–National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR–NIN)**, aims to serve as a behavioural nudge to promote healthier dietary habits among government employees and visitors.
- Recommended daily intake:
 - ♦ **Sugar:** 25 grams
 - ♦ **Visible fat:** 30 grams

Significance of the Move

- India faces a growing burden of **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** like diabetes and heart disease, driven by poor dietary habits, including excess sugar and fat intake.

- By encouraging informed food choices, the initiative supports **preventive healthcare** and could be a first step toward broader regulation of **trans fat-rich food**.

What is Trans fat?

- Trans fat (or trans-fatty acids) is a type of unsaturated fat that is harmful to health.
 - ♦ **Increases LDL Cholesterol:** Trans fats can raise levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol in the blood, which can contribute to the buildup of plaque in arteries and increase the risk of heart disease.
 - ♦ **Reduces HDL Cholesterol:** They can also lower levels of “good” HDL cholesterol, which helps remove LDL cholesterol from the body.

Types of Trans fat

- **Natural trans fats:** Found in small amounts in meat and dairy from ruminant animals.
- **Artificial (industrial) trans fats:** Created by adding hydrogen to liquid oils (a process called hydrogenation) to make them solid.
 - ♦ It is found in Vanaspati (hydrogenated oils), Bakery products (cakes, biscuits), Fried foods (samosas, pakoras), Street foods cooked in reused oil.

Source: **TH**

NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL PRICING AUTHORITY (NPPA)

In News

- The **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** has fixed the prices of 71 medicines commonly used for diabetes & cancer.

About National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)

- It is an independent government regulatory agency established in 1997 under the **Department of Pharmaceuticals**, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- Its primary mandate is to fix, revise, and monitor the prices of pharmaceutical drugs and formulations in India, ensuring medicines remain affordable and accessible to every citizen.
- The NPPA used the powers granted to it under the **Drug (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 2013** to regulate the prices for these medicines.

Source: **IE**

AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES 2025 MAITRI GRANTS

In News

- Australia and India are deepening their partnership through the 2025 Maitri Grants, Fellowships, and Scholarships.

About Maitri Grants

- The Maitri (meaning friendship) Grants is administered by the Centre for **Australia-India Relations**.
- It aims to support greater exchange and collaboration with India across technology, business, education and culture.
- Key initiatives include the **Lowy Institute's India Chair**, **Asialink Business playbooks** for cleantech and agtech partnerships, a major exhibition of Raja Ravi Varma's artworks, and a storytelling incubator led by Bodhini Studios.
- The 2024–2025 round also funds 13 research scholarships and 3 fellowships focused on areas like quantum computing, clean energy, biomanufacturing, maritime cooperation, and digital governance.

Source :IE

ROLL ON-ROLL OFF (RORO) FERRY BOATS IN THE MANDОВI RIVER

In News

- The Goa government has launched two advanced Roll on-Roll off (RoRo) ferries, 'Gangotri' and 'Dwarka', on the **Chorao-Ribandar route in the Mandovi river**.

The Mandovi River

- It is one of the main **West Flowing Rivers of Goa State**.
- It rises in the Jamboti Ghats in Karnataka State.
 - ♦ The total length of this West Flowing River from its origin to its outfall into the Arabian Sea is 62 km.
- The **important tributaries** of Mandovi River are Sarang, Mahainada, Udel, Lohi, Velvota Bicholim, Mapuce, Nanoda and Khandepar.

Roll on-Roll off (RoRo) ferry boats

- **Roll-on & Roll-off ("Ro-Ro")** waterways projects comprise of Ro-Ro ships/vessels which are designed to carry wheeled cargo, such as cars, trucks, semi-trailer trucks, trailers and railroad

cars that are driven on and off the ship on their wheels or using a platform vehicle.

- ♦ It also **comprises jetties**, with related port terminals and approach connectivity infrastructure.
- Roll on-Roll off (RoRo) ferries 'Gangotri' and 'Dwarka' are eco-friendly ferries, built by Vijai Marine Shipyards on a Built-Own-Operate-Transfer model.
- ♦ This is **India's first RoRo ferry service**, aimed at improving waterway transport.
- They can carry up to 100 passengers, 15 four-wheelers, and 30–40 two-wheelers, reducing travel time from 30 to 12–13 minutes.

Importance

- The ferries feature faster speeds, modern technology, air-conditioned passenger compartments, and emergency medical kits, with plans to expand the service to other routes.

Source :IE

INDIA SIGNS LONG-TERM FERTILIZER SUPPLY AGREEMENTS WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Context

- The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Chemicals and Fertilizers concluded his **three-day visit to Saudi Arabia**.

Key Outcome

- Signing of **long-term supply agreements** between Saudi Arabia's Maaden and Indian companies (IPL, KRIBHCO, CIL).
 - ♦ **Supply of 3.1 million metric tons** of Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) annually from 2025-26, up from 1.9 million MT in 2024–25.
 - ♦ Agreements **valid for 5 years**, with an option to extend for another 5 years by mutual consent.
- **India's DAP imports from Saudi Arabia** increased by 17% in FY 2024–25 (1.9 MT) over FY 2023–24 (1.6 MT).
- **Significance:** The long-term fertilizer agreements are expected to provide **greater supply security for India's agricultural sector** and strengthen the strategic partnership between the two nations.

What is DAP?

- **Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP)** is a type of fertilizer that contains **phosphorus and nitrogen**, two essential nutrients for plant growth.

- ♦ Nano DAP contains **nanoparticles of Diammonium Phosphate (DAP)** which helps in better crop growth and yield.
- DAP is commonly used in agriculture to provide a **quick and readily available source of nutrients to plants.**
- It is the **second most commonly** used fertilizer in India after urea.

Source: AIR

SHINKANSEN TECHNOLOGY

In News

- India will be among the first countries in the world to debut the next-generation **E10 Shinkansen** bullet trains.

About E10 Shinkansen

- Also known as the Alfa-X, the E10 can reach speeds up to 400 km/h, offering significant improvements in speed, safety, energy efficiency, and passenger comfort over the E5, which tops out at 320 km/h.
- The E10 will replace the E2 and E5 fleets in Japan and mark a major leap forward for high-speed rail in India.
- Equipped with automatic train control (ATC), Shinkansen eliminates the need for trackside signals and maintains a perfect safety record.

Source: HT

