

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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PAIKA REBELLION

In News

- Former Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik criticized the exclusion of the 1817 Paika Rebellion from NCERT's new Class VIII history textbook, calling it a "huge dishonour" to the Paikas.
 - ♦ However, NCERT clarified that the rebellion will be included in the textbook's second volume to be released later.

Who were Paikas?

- The Paikas (pronounced "paiko", literally "foot soldiers") were a class of military retainers who had been recruited from various social groups by the Gajapati rulers of Odisha since the 16th century.
- They would render martial services to the king in return for hereditary rent-free land (nish-kar jagirs) which they would cultivate during peacetime.
- Paika Rebellion was an armed uprising in Odisha against British rule, led by Bakshi Jagabandhu, a military chief of King Mukund Dev II.

Triggering Factors for Rebellion

- In 1803, the British annexed Odisha after Colonel Harcourt's largely uncontested march from Madras to Puri, making an agreement with King Mukunda Deva II for compensation and land that was only partly honored.
- British policies, including new land revenue systems, currency changes, and control over salt, caused widespread economic hardship, particularly for the Paikas who lost their hereditary rent-free lands.
- This mounting discontent culminated in the 1817 Paika Rebellion, led by Bakshi Jagabandhu and joined by Kondh tribals, involving attacks on British officials and government property.

Suppression and Legacy

- Though initially fierce, the revolt was eventually crushed, and Jagabandhu surrendered in 1825.
- The rebellion was part of broader 19th-century rural uprisings against British disruption of traditional social and economic structures.
 - ♦ Despite its failure, the rebellion inspired future resistance movements and remains a symbol of Odia pride.

Recognition

- In 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi felicitated more than 200 descendants of Paika warriors in Bhubaneswar.

- In 2019, then President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of the Paika Memorial at Barunei foothills.
- Last year, Odisha's Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced that the Paika Academy and Paika Memorial would be established expeditiously at Barunei near Khurda.

Source: IE

CAN PRESIDENTIAL REFERENCE CHANGE A JUDGMENT?

Context

- The Supreme Court has issued notices to the Union Government and all States on Presidential reference on the President and Governor's powers.
 - ♦ The SC seeks opinion on whether the President and Governors can be judicially compelled to act within prescribed timelines on Bills passed by State legislatures.

Background

- Recently, the Supreme Court verdict laid down a timeline for the President and governors to decide on state bills.
- Generally, the Governor is not bound by any time limit to act on a Bill.
 - ♦ This creates a situation where the Governor can simply not act on a Bill indefinitely this is referred to as a "Pocket Veto", although the term is not officially used in the Constitution.
- The Supreme Court ruled that Governors cannot delay or withhold assent to Bills indefinitely once they are passed or re-passed by the state Assembly.
- The ruling set a timeline for the Governor to act on Bills:
 - ♦ One month for re-passed Bills.
 - ♦ Three months if the Bill is withheld contrary to Cabinet advice.
- It raises questions about the scope of judicial authority under Article 142, and whether the courts can enforce accountability on constitutional functionaries like Governors and the President.
- President Droupadi Murmu sought the Supreme Court's advisory opinion under Article 143 on whether the President and governors need to follow timelines to decide on state bills.

Article 143 Presidential Reference

- Article 143(1): The President can refer any question of law or fact that is of public importance to the Supreme Court for its advisory opinion.
 - ♦ The Court may choose to answer or decline, however, if the court chooses not to respond, it must record its reasons.
 - ♦ The opinion is not binding, but is highly respected: In Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (1991), the court reiterated that advisory opinions are entitled to “due weight and respect” and are “normally followed.” However, it refrained from settling the question of their binding nature, observing that the issue could be revisited at a more appropriate time.
 - ♦ The court is bound to limit itself strictly to the questions referred by the President and cannot exceed the scope of the Reference.
- The Constitution extended the provision in the Government of India Act, 1935 to seek the opinion of the Federal Court on questions of law to questions of fact as well, including certain hypotheticals.
- Article 145(3) requires any such reference to be heard by five judges, after which the SC returns the reference to the President with the majority opinion.
- Need for the Article: Under the Constitution, the President acts on the aid and advice of the Cabinet.
 - ♦ The advisory jurisdiction allows the President the means to seek independent advice to act on certain constitutional matters.
 - ♦ It is a power that the President has invoked on at least 15 occasions since 1950.

Can the court overturn its April 8 ruling through the Reference?

- In the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal Reference, the Supreme Court held that:
 - ♦ Article 143 cannot be used by the executive to seek a review or reversal of settled judicial decisions.
 - ♦ The Court warned against framing questions that indirectly reopen previously decided cases.
- In Natural Resources Allocation (2012), the SC clarified:
 - ♦ There is no constitutional bar on the Court refining or restating a legal opinion under Article 143(1).

- ♦ This is permissible as long as the core reasoning and rights of parties in the original case remain unaffected.
- Therefore, the April 8 judgment is final and binding. However, its legal findings may still be refined or elaborated upon by the Constitution Bench.
- ♦ The current Reference includes 14 questions of law, which are largely related to the April 8 ruling but are not limited to it.
- ♦ It raises broader issues on the scope and use of the Supreme Court’s discretionary powers under the Constitution.

Source: TH**JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEBATE OVER IN-HOUSE INQUIRY MECHANISM****Context**

- The Chief Justice of India has agreed to constitute a Bench to hear a petition filed on behalf of Justice Yashwant Varma (Allahabad High Court), challenging the constitutional validity of the in-house inquiry mechanism.

Background

- In March 2025, unaccounted cash was allegedly found at Justice Yashwant Varma’s residence, prompting an in-house committee to recommend his removal without granting him a personal hearing.
 - ♦ After he refused to resign, a removal motion was initiated in Parliament.
- The case has triggered a serious debate over judicial independence, the doctrine of separation of powers, and the limits of internal judicial oversight.

In-House Procedure for Investigation

- To address judicial misconduct outside the formal impeachment process, the Supreme Court in 1999 adopted an “in-house procedure” for conducting investigations;
 - ♦ Filing Complaints: Complaints can be made to the CJI, High Court Chief Justice, or the President.
 - ♦ Preliminary Inquiry: The Chief Justice of the High Court seeks a response from the accused judge and forwards the findings to the CJI.

- ♦ Fact-Finding Committee: If serious allegations arise, the CJI appoints a committee comprising two Chief Justices of other High Courts and one High Court judge to investigate.
- ♦ Recommendations and Action: If the committee finds sufficient grounds for removal, the CJI may advise the judge to resign. If the judge refuses, the report is forwarded to the President and the Prime Minister for further action, paving the way for impeachment.

Constitutional and Legal Issues Raised

- Constitutional Validity of In-House Procedure: The petition contends that the in-house inquiry lacks constitutional or statutory backing, violating Article 124(4) and Articles 218, which lay down the exclusive parliamentary procedure for removing High Court and Supreme Court judges.
- Violation of Principles of Natural Justice: The petition claims no personal hearing or access to the full report was provided, and the evidence—photos and videos—lacked procedural validity, undermining due process under Articles 14 and 21.
- Separation of Powers: The removal of judges is, by constitutional design, a parliamentary function, not a judicial one. Critics argue that by creating and enforcing an internal mechanism for judge accountability, the judiciary is effectively usurping the powers of Parliament.

Way Ahead

- Need for Institutional Clarity: There is an urgent need to codify the process for preliminary inquiries against judges, with safeguards similar to those in the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968.
 - ♦ The in-house mechanism must be made more transparent, accountable, and procedurally fair.
- Balance Between Independence and Accountability: Judicial independence must not translate into immunity from scrutiny.
 - ♦ Simultaneously, disciplinary measures must not undermine judges' rights to due process.

Source: TH

INDIA-SOUTH AFRICA MARITIME PARTNERSHIP

Context

- India and South Africa signed two agreements on submarine cooperation during the 9th Joint Defence Committee meeting in Johannesburg.

- ♦ While the specifics of these deals have yet to be fully detailed, it signals a potential deepening of maritime ties between influential Indian Ocean powers.

Significance of Cooperation Between two Countries

- Blue-Water Collaboration: For India's goal to bolster blue-water naval presence, cooperation with South Africa enhances reach across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.
- Shared Security Beyond Submarines: These agreements bolster not just rescue, but also training, surveillance, and joint R&D—a key to addressing threats like piracy, trafficking, and strategic rivalries.
- Defence Industrial Growth: India's defence manufacturing prowess, highlighted by Defence Secretary, aligns well with South Africa's naval modernization ambitions.
- Regional & Historical Significance: Rooted in shared anti-colonial histories, this partnership extends diplomatic convergence into deeper defence integration.



India-South Africa Relations

- History of Friendship: India and South Africa share historic ties rooted in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. India was the first country to cut trade ties with the apartheid regime in 1946 and led international efforts at the UN and NAM to impose sanctions.
- Diplomatic Relations: Formal diplomatic ties were restored in 1993.
 - ♦ The Red Fort Declaration of 1997 created a Strategic Partnership.
 - ♦ 2023 marked 30 years of renewed diplomatic relations.
- Defence and Maritime Cooperation: Defence cooperation began in 1996.
 - ♦ India and South Africa conduct joint naval exercises like IBSAMAR (India-Brazil-South Africa Maritime) and MILAN.

- ♦ South Africa also participates in India-Africa Defence Dialogue and has sent liaison officers to India's IFC-IOR.
- Political Engagement: India and South Africa regularly hold high-level meetings at BRICS, G20, and IBSA forums.
 - ♦ President Cyril Ramaphosa was the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day in 2019.
- Trade and Investment: Bilateral trade reached \$19.25 billion in 2023–24.
 - ♦ India exports vehicles, pharma products, rice, and chemicals.
 - ♦ It imports gold, coal, copper ore, phosphoric acid, and manganese from South Africa.
 - ♦ India is among the top 10 trading partners of South Africa.
- Skill and Education Cooperation: The Gandhi-Mandela Centre of Specialisation was set up in Pretoria in 2021 to train artisans.
 - ♦ India offers ITEC training programmes for South African professionals.
- Indian Diaspora: South Africa has a 1.7 million strong Indian-origin population.

Challenges

- Political Challenges: For any ambitious defence partnership to succeed, sustained political will is essential. South Africa, however, faces a far more fragile political landscape.
 - ♦ Also, South Africa's foreign policy has often prioritised ideological solidarity and support for liberation movements over concrete security interests.
- Different Priorities: Domestic priorities such as economic recovery, addressing inequality, and stabilising coalition politics are likely to overshadow external security partnerships.
- Strategic Divergences: India views the Indian Ocean as central to its economic and strategic future, for South Africa, maritime security is important but not existential.
 - ♦ Its primary foreign policy remains focused on continental African issues and domestic socio-economic challenges.

Way Ahead

- The submarine agreements represent a promising new chapter in India–South Africa relations.
- South Africa will need to address its economic constraints and overcome internal political distractions to sustain meaningful participation.

- For India, the challenge lies in ensuring that its growing network of African partnerships translates into tangible outcomes rather than stalling at the level of declarations and high-profile visits.

Source: IE

DROP IN NET FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

In News

- Net FDI inflows in India dropped by 98.2% to about \$40 million in May 2025, compared to \$2.2 billion in May 2024.

Reasons for Decline

- Increased repatriation and divestment by foreign investors.
- Higher outward FDI by Indian companies.
- Gross FDI inflows also dipped somewhat to \$7.2 billion from \$8.1 billion year-on-year.

What is Net FDI?

- Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) refers to the difference between gross FDI inflows into a country and the outflows due to repatriation of profits, divestment, or outward FDI from that country.
 - It essentially represents the net addition of foreign capital into the domestic economy after accounting for foreign capital leaving the country.

Source of FDI for India

- Major Sources: Singapore, Mauritius, UAE, and the US together accounted for over 75% of FDI inflows in May 2025.
- Top Sectors: Manufacturing, financial services, and computer services dominated FDI absorption.

Implications of Net FDI Decline

- Short-Term Impact: Sharp drops in net FDI can create temporary pressure on the balance of payments and external finances.
- Economic Confidence: Despite the net dip, gross inflows remain solid, showing sustained investor confidence in India's growth prospects.
- Sectoral Effects: Sectors dependent on foreign investments see short-term liquidity or expansion challenges if outflows persist.
- Market Maturity: RBI suggests the rising repatriation signals a "mature market" where foreign investors have liquidity flexibility to enter and exit smoothly.

Types of Foreign Direct Investment

- Horizontal FDI: The foreign investor replicates the same business operations in another country. Example: McDonald's or Toyota setting up restaurants/factories in India.
- Vertical FDI: Investor expands into a different stage of production (not the same product). For example: Investing in distribution or sales (a U.S. oil company investing in a chain of fuel stations in India).
- Conglomerate FDI: Investor ventures into an unrelated business in the foreign country. For example: A manufacturing firm investing in banking abroad.
- Greenfield FDI: Building a new factory in India by a foreign firm.
- Brownfield FDI: Investment in existing facilities overseas. For example: Buying and upgrading an existing plant or unit abroad.

Source: BS

STUDY ON GST BURDEN ON INDIAN HOUSEHOLDS

In Context

- A recent study analysing India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime using the 2022–23 Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) has revealed that the bottom 50% of consumers bear the same GST burden as the middle 30%, raising important questions about the tax system's progressivity and equity.

Key Findings from the Study

- The study by Prof. Sacchidananda Mukherjee of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) highlights the following:
 - ♦ Rural Areas:
 - Bottom 50% bear 31% of the GST burden
 - Middle 30% also bear 31%
 - Top 20% carry 37%
 - ♦ Urban Areas:
 - Bottom 50% bear 29%
 - Middle 30% account for 30%
 - Top 20% shoulder the highest burden at 41%
 - ♦ These findings contrast with earlier reports, such as Oxfam's 2023 Analysis, which claimed the poorest 50% contributed nearly two-thirds of total GST collections, while the richest 10% contributed only 3–4%.

How Is GST Intended to Work?

- GST is a consumption-based indirect tax and is designed for simplicity and broad-based collection.
- Essential items (such as unbranded grains, fruits, vegetables) are largely exempted or taxed at lower rates to protect the poor, while non-essentials and luxury goods are taxed higher.
- In theory, if the tax were truly progressive, higher-income groups would bear a significantly larger share of GST relative to their consumption.
- However, above findings indicate that the GST is only mildly progressive by international standards, as measured by various indices (Kakwani Index, Reynolds-Smolensky Index, etc.), and its redistributive effect is positive yet limited.

Reason for Such Trend

- High Necessities Spending: Lower-income groups spend a large share of their total income on goods/services that attract GST, even though some essentials are tax-exempt.
- Limited Progressivity: While high-income households purchase more luxury and highly-taxed items, their share of GST paid does not rise proportionately with income.
- Tax Structure: GST exemptions on basic goods help, but not enough to prevent the burden from falling similarly on the bottom and middle income groups.
- Indirect Nature of GST: GST taxes expenditure, not ability to pay, making it inherently less progressive than direct taxes.

Implications

- Equity Concerns: GST's mildly progressive nature means that it doesn't substantially redistribute income or address inequality.
- Potential Regressivity: For the poorest, GST can be regressive as they spend most of their income on consumption.
- Social Justice: Persistent high GST burden on the bottom half may push for greater welfare spending or targeted subsidies elsewhere.

Way Ahead & Needed Reforms

- Enhance Progressivity: Reduce GST rates for goods/services critical to lower-income groups beyond the current list of essentials.
- Strengthen Exemption Framework: Periodically revise the basket of tax-exempt/low-tax essentials based on evolving household consumption data.

- Improve Data and Targeting: Adopt regular impact studies to track GST's distributional consequences.

What is GST?

- Definition: GST is a comprehensive, destination-based indirect tax levied on the supply of goods and services, subsuming multiple indirect taxes (such as VAT, excise, service tax).
- Rate Structure: Multiple rates (0%, 5%, 12%, 18%, 28%) depending on the goods/services, plus some special rates and cess for sin/luxury goods.
 - ♦ Some items like petroleum, alcohol, and electricity remain outside the GST ambit, leading to calls for further inclusion.
- Input Tax Credit: Allows seamless credit for taxes paid at previous stages, reducing cascading tax effects.
- GST Council: The GST Council, a federal body comprising the Union Finance Minister and State Finance Ministers, governs the structure, rates, and reforms of GST, ensuring cooperative federalism.

Source: IE

more radical Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).

- He was involved in the 1925 Kakori Train robbery, an attempt to blow up the India Viceroy's train, and the shooting of British police officer JP Saunders in 1928 to avenge the killing of the great freedom fighter, Lala Lajpat Rai.
- After the Central Assembly bombing in 1929 and the subsequent British crackdown, Azad remained underground, trying to free Bhagat Singh.

Death and Legacy

- On February 27, 1931, surrounded by police in Allahabad's Alfred Park, he helped a comrade escape, killed three policemen, and, with only one bullet left, shot himself to avoid capture.
 - ♦ He died at just 24, staying true to his name and vow — Azad (free) until the end.
- His role in India's quest for freedom is deeply valued and motivates our youth to stand up for what is just, with courage and conviction".

Source :PIB

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

Context

- PM Modi has paid tributes to Lokmanya Tilak on his birth anniversary.

Early Life

- Born on July 23, 1856, in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri, he was a freedom fighter, social thinker, philosopher, teacher, one of the first and strongest advocates of Swaraj ("self-rule") who had played an important role in India's freedom movement.
- He organized two important festivals, Ganeshotsav in 1893 and Shiv Jayanti in 1895.

Political career

- In 1890, Tilak joined the Indian National Congress.
- Tilak opposed the moderate views of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and was supported by fellow Indian nationalists Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal and Lala Lajpat Rai in Punjab. They were referred to as the "Lal-Bal-Pal".
 - ♦ The trio also mobilized Indians against the Bengal partition and proposed the Swadeshi movement and boycott of foreign goods.
- Tilak was arrested by the British on the charges of sedition in 1908 and sentenced to six years of imprisonment in Mandalay (Burma).

NEWS IN SHORT

CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

In News

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Chandra Shekhar Azad on his birth anniversary.

Chandra Shekhar Azad

- He was born in 1906 in present-day Madhya Pradesh, grew up in poverty and became involved in the freedom struggle as a teenager during the Non-Cooperation Movement.
- He was Arrested for protest activities, he famously declared his name as "Azad" and vowed never to be captured alive.
- He was Disillusioned by Gandhi's withdrawal of the movement in 1922

Role in Freedom struggle

- He joined the Hindustan Republican Army (HRA), later transforming it with Bhagat Singh into the

- He founded the Home Rule League in April 1916 at Belagavi, aiming to increase political awareness and mobilize support for self-rule.
- In 1916, he concluded the Lucknow Pact with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, which provided for Hindu-Muslim unity in the nationalist struggle.
- He was conferred with the title of "Lokmanya", which means "accepted by the people (as their leader)" and Mahatma Gandhi called him "The Maker of Modern India".

Literary Work

- He launched two weeklies, Kesari (in Marathi) and Mahratta (in English), which criticized British policies of the time.
- He published The Orion or Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas (1893) and The Arctic Home in the Vedas (1903).
- In the Mandalay jail, he wrote the Srimad Bhagavadgita Rahasya (Secret of the Bhagavadgita), an original exposition of the most sacred book of the Hindus.

Source: PIB

RAJENDRA CHOLA I

In News

- The Ministry of Culture to celebrate the birth anniversary of Chola emperor Rajendra Chola I with the Aadi Thiruvathirai Festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Tamil Nadu.

Rajendra Chola I (1014–1044 CE)

- He was one of the most powerful and visionary rulers in Indian history.
- Under his leadership, the Chola Empire expanded its influence across South and Southeast Asia.
- He established Gangaikonda Cholapuram as the imperial capital after his victorious campaigns, and the temple he built there served as a beacon of Shaiva devotion, monumental architecture, and administrative prowess for over 250 years.
 - ♦ Today, the temple stands as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its intricate sculptures, Chola bronzes, and ancient inscriptions.

Major Roles

- Rajendra Chola I is famed for his exploits, but his military expedition to the Gangetic plains about a thousand years ago remains one of the most celebrated in the history of the Chola dynasty.

- During the expedition to the Gangetic plains, Rajendra Chola I defeated several kings and chieftains, including the Kalinga ruler and the Pala ruler Mahipala of Bengal.
 - ♦ Rajendra Chola I also brought several beautiful Chalukya and Kalinga sculptures as war trophies.
- The Tiruvalangadu, Esalam, and Karanthai Copper Plates, several inscriptions, and literary works celebrate his victory and the construction of the Brihadisvara Temple, listed as one of the three great living Chola temples by UNESCO.

Source :PIB

CHOLA GANGAM LAKE

In News

- The Tamil Nadu government has recently announced a major initiative to develop the historic Chola Gangam Lake (also known as Ponneri Lake).

About

- Chola Gangam Lake was constructed by Rajendra Chola I (1014–1044 CE) and is an exemplary work of Chola-era hydraulic engineering, originally built to commemorate his victorious northern campaign and bring sacred Ganga water to his new capital.
- The lake and its associated canals were integral to the functioning and prosperity of Gangaikonda Cholapuram, illustrating advanced water management and urban planning under the Cholas.

Source: TH

PALNA SCHEME

Context

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has approved 14,599 Anganwadi-cum-Crèches (AWCCs) under the Palna Scheme, aimed at providing quality daycare and protection to children.

About the Palna Scheme

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has introduced the Palna Scheme under the Samarthya Vertical of Umbrella Mission Shakti for all States and Union Territories in 2022.
- Target Beneficiaries: All children aged 6 months to 6 years and their mothers (irrespective of employment status).

- Key Features:

- ♦ Provision of full-day childcare support through Anganwadi Centres.
- ♦ Focus on nutrition, health, cognitive development, and growth monitoring.
- ♦ Integration with existing Anganwadi infrastructure to ensure last-mile delivery.

Source: PIB

VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

Context

- A major new study suggests that the vitamin D levels might contribute to psychological and neurodevelopmental conditions.

Vitamin-D

- It is a fat-soluble vitamin essential for bone and immune health.
- Two main forms:
 - ♦ Vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol) – from plant sources and fortified foods.
 - ♦ Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) – produced in the skin upon sunlight (UVB) exposure; also found in animal sources.
- Recommended Intake: 600 IU/day for adults.
 - ♦ Higher needs in the elderly, pregnant and lactating women.
 - ♦ 1 IU is the biological equivalent of 0.025 mcg cholecalciferol or ergocalciferol.
- Functions:
 - ♦ Calcium and phosphorus absorption from the intestine.
 - ♦ Maintains bone and dental health.
 - ♦ Supports immune system regulation.
 - ♦ Plays a role in muscle function and cell growth.
- Sources: Natural Sources - Sunlight, Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel), Egg yolks
 - ♦ Supplements - Common in case of deficiency, especially in northern latitudes or sedentary indoor lifestyles.
- Diseases: Rickets in children (bone deformities), Osteomalacia in adults (soft bones), Osteoporosis (brittle bones), Increased susceptibility to infections.

Source: TH

NATIONAL BROADCASTING DAY

In News

- National Broadcasting Day is observed on July 23 to commemorate the first-ever radio broadcast in India.

History and Significance of Broadcasting in India

- India's broadcasting journey began in June 1923 with the Radio Club of Bombay's first transmission.
- The Indian Broadcasting Company (IBC) was established on July 23, 1927, marking the birth of organized radio broadcasting in the country.
- All India Radio (AIR) emerged in 1936, evolving from the Indian State Broadcasting Service.
- Post-independence, AIR expanded rapidly, adopting the name "Akashvani" in 1956.
 - ♦ Today, AIR operates 591 stations, reaching 98% of India's population and broadcasting in 23 languages and 146 dialects.

Importance

- Broadcasting has played a crucial role in India's development. During the independence struggle, radio was a powerful tool for disseminating information and fostering unity.
- Post-independence, it has been instrumental in promoting literacy, health awareness, and agricultural knowledge, especially in rural areas.
- The introduction of FM channels and the transition to digital transmission using Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) technology demonstrate AIR's commitment to modernization.

Key Milestones in India's Broadcasting History

1923	First radio broadcast by Radio Club of Bombay	1977	First FM Service inaugurated from Madras	2014	AIR launched a new mobile app providing live streaming of various stations.
1927	Indian Broadcasting Company (IBC) established - Now celebrated as National Broadcasting Day	1988	Introduction of National Channel	2015	Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Maan Ki Baat" program gained significant popularity, becoming a notable platform on AIR.
1930	The commencement of the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS)	1997	Prasar Bharati Corporation came into existence	2016	AIR started a new service, AIR Live News 24x7, providing continuous news coverage.
1936	Indian State Broadcasting Service became All India Radio	2000	Community Radio Stations commissioned in North-East India	2017	AIR launched a YouTube channel to reach a global audience with its programs.
1939	External Service started with Pushtu broadcast	2004	DRM Service of AIR 6 Doordarshan inaugurated	2018	AIR launched its service on Amazon Alexa, making it accessible via smart speakers.
1947	At independence, AIR had six radio stations in India	2006	Uplinking of DRM channels increased from 12 to 20	2019	AIR revamped its programming schedule to include more youth-oriented content.
1956	AIR officially renamed 'Akashvani'	2011	FM Gold started 24 Hours Service	2020	AIR played a crucial role in disseminating information about COVID-19 during the nationwide lockdown.
1957	Vividh Bharati Service launched	2012	Bangladesh recognizes Akashvani for its contribution in Bangladesh Liberation War	2021-23	Special programs on Independence Day, Republic Day, 62nd Presidency etc.
1969	Yuv-Vani service started from Delhi	2013	AIR's FM Rainbow celebrated its 20th anniversary.	2024	AIR introduced AI-based Interactive services for listeners.

Source: AIR

ADB LOWERS INDIA'S FY26 GROWTH FORECAST TO 6.5%

Context

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB), in its Asian Development Outlook July 2025, revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY2025–26 downward to 6.5% from 6.7%, primarily due to the effects of US tariff policies.

About Asian Development Bank

- ADB is a regional development bank established in 1966 for Social and Economic Development. It has 68 members.
- It is a multilateral development bank, which seeks to help its developing member countries to reduce poverty and improve their people's quality of life through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth and regional integration.
- Headquarters: Manila, Philippines.

Source: BS

STAR – HOPS-315

In News

- Astronomers have, for the first time, witnessed the early stages of rocky planet formation by directly detecting minerals condensing from vapor around a young star, HOPS-315.

What is HOPS-315?

- HOPS-315 is a newborn protostar located about 1,300 light-years away in the Orion molecular cloud. It is surrounded by a dense, flat, rotating protoplanetary disc made of gas and dust, which is uniquely inclined so that Earth-based telescopes can peer deep into its interior—a rare vantage point for studying early planet formation.

Significance of the Discovery

- Planet Formation Genesis: This breakthrough offers direct insight into the fundamental process of how rocky planets, like Earth, initially form from vaporized rock in protoplanetary discs.

- Solar System Parallel: The observed processes and the types of minerals found around HOPS-315 remarkably mimic the early stages of our own Solar System's formation.
- Interstellar Mineral Match: The mineral types detected, such as forsterite and enstatite, mirror those found as inclusions in chondritic meteorites on Earth.

Source: TH

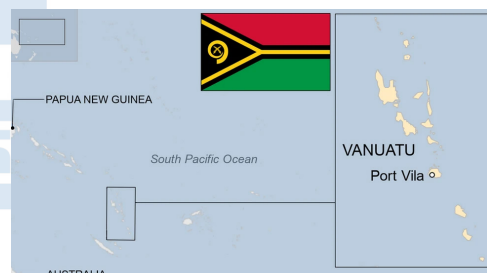
VANUATU

Context

- Led by Vanuatu, the International Court of Justice will issue an advisory opinion on what legal obligations nations have to address climate change and what consequences they may face if they don't.

Vanuatu

- Vanuatu is a double chain of 13 principal and many smaller islands in the south-western Pacific Ocean.



- Gained full independence in 1980 and joined the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations.
- The islands are volcanic and coral in origin.
- They lie about 800 kilometres west of Fiji and nearly 1800 kilometres east of Australia.
- Located in the "Ring of Fire" – prone to earthquakes, cyclones, and volcanic eruptions.

Source: TH