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QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

In News

- The **Quit India Movement (QIM)**, launched on 8 August 1942 by the Indian National Congress at Bombay's Gowalia Tank Maidan, marked the most intense phase of India's freedom struggle.

Background and Causes

- Global Geopolitical Context:** Japanese advances in Southeast Asia and the fall of Burma (1942) brought the war to India's borders.
 - Allied vulnerability created both an opportunity and urgency for Indian leaders.
- Failure of the Cripps Mission (April 1942):** Britain sent Sir Stafford Cripps to negotiate with Indian leaders amid WWII, promising only Dominion Status, not full independence.
 - Congress rejected the proposal, especially the clause allowing for India's partition.
 - Gandhi and other leaders realized the British had no intention of granting real self-rule.
- Public Anger and Frustration:** Wartime hardships, high prices, and shortages created widespread discontent.
 - British evacuations of only Whites during Japanese advances caused fear and outrage.
- Perceived British Vulnerability:** Allied military losses and rumors of British casualties weakened the perception of British invincibility.
 - Many believed the British rule was nearing collapse, fuelling hope for freedom.

Quit India Movement: Demands

- Immediate withdrawal of British forces from the country.
- Formation of a government accountable to the Indian people.
- Peaceful but total non-cooperation with British authority.
- Appealed to government servants, soldiers, and princely states to support the national cause.

Outcomes

- The Quit India movement was violently suppressed by the British – people were shot, lathi-charged, villages burnt and enormous fines imposed.
- In the five months up to December 1942, an estimated 60,000 people had been thrown in jail.
- However, The Quit India Movement marked a **turning point in India's freedom struggle**, showcasing the **mass desire for independence** and the weakening legitimacy of British rule.
- It remains a defining moment in Indian history, uniting ordinary people from all backgrounds

along with prominent political leaders, sharing a common goal of self-rule and sovereignty.

Do you know?

- By August 9, 1942, all senior Congress leaders were arrested, including Gandhiji himself, who was imprisoned at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune.
- Despite the leadership vacuum, the **Quit India Movement turned into a spontaneous people's uprising**.
- Massive protests erupted across major cities like Bombay, Poona, Ahmedabad, Delhi, UP, and Bihar.
- Strikes, demonstrations, and acts of civil disobedience spread into small towns and villages.
- Railway lines were blocked, government buildings attacked, and students and workers went on strike.
- Some protests turned violent, involving sabotage like cutting telegraph wires and destroying bridges.
- Ram Manohar Lohia later called **August 9 a "people's event" symbolizing mass desire for freedom**.
- The slogan "**Quit India**" was coined by **Yusuf Meherally**, a socialist and trade unionist, who had also coined "**Simon Go Back**" in 1928.

Source :IE

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF KAKORI INCIDENT

Context

- The Kakori Train Action was carried out by **members of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)** on 9 August 1925 near Kakori, a village in present-day Uttar Pradesh.

About Kakori Incident

- Background:** HRA was founded in **1924** by Ram Prasad Bismil, Sachindra Nath Sanyal, and others, aimed to **overthrow British colonial rule through armed revolution**.
 - It **needed funds** for revolutionary activities, therefore decided to target government money being transported by train.
- The **Revolutionaries include** Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Thakur Roshan Singh, Rajendranath Lahiri and Sachindranath Sanyal.

- In 1927, Ram Prasad 'Bismil', Ashfaqulla Khan and Thakur Roshan Singh were hanged to death by the British government for their involvement in the incident.

Significance of the Kakori Incident

- Symbol of Revolutionary Sacrifice:** The executions inspired a generation of young Indians.
- Unity Beyond Religion:** The friendship between Bismil and Ashfaqullah became a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity in the freedom struggle.
- Strategic Shift:** Post-Kakori, revolutionaries moved from armed robberies to more targeted political actions (e.g., Assembly Bombing, 1929).
- British Fear of Underground Networks:** Intensified surveillance and intelligence gathering by colonial authorities.

About Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (1928)

- Founded:** Feroz Shah Kotla, Delhi, 1928.
- Key Leaders:** Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Shiv Verma, Chandrashekhar Azad, Vijay Kumar Sinha.
- Core Principle:** Building a Socialist Republic of India; combining political liberation with socio-economic transformation.

Source: AIR

LADAKH: DEMAND FOR STATEHOOD & SIXTH SCHEDULE

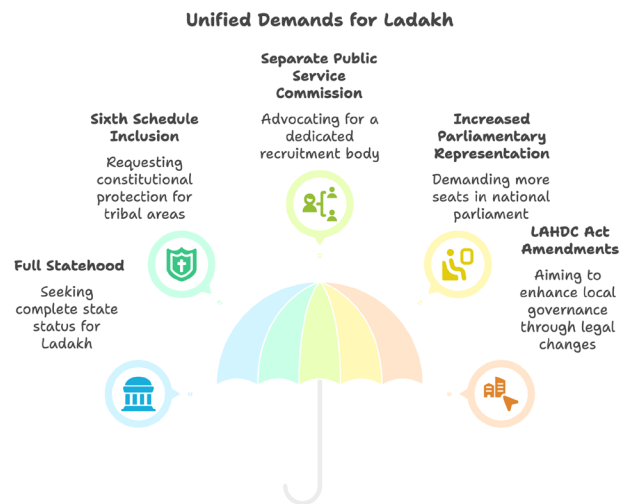
Context

- Recently, renowned climate activist and **Ramon Magsaysay Award** winner **Sonam Wangchuk** joined a protest, demanding **statehood for Ladakh** and its inclusion in the **Sixth Schedule of the Constitution**.

Historical Background

- Historically, Ladakh was part of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir.
- For decades, Ladakhis felt politically marginalized, with **decisions being made in Srinagar** that often overlooked the region's unique cultural and ecological needs.
- After **abrogation of Article 370**, Ladakh was carved out as a UT **without a legislature**, under the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**.
 - It is **governed directly by the Lieutenant Governor** and the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, with **limited local decision-making**, unlike Delhi or Puducherry.

- However, the **removal of Article 35A**, which had offered some **protection to Ladakh's land and employment rights**, left many feeling vulnerable.



Why Ladakh Became a UT?

- Cultural & Demographic Identity:** Buddhist-majority Leh and Shia-majority Kargil are culturally distinct from the Sunni-majority Kashmir Valley.
- Security Considerations:** Borders both Pakistan (PoK) and China (Aksai Chin); strategic sensitivity necessitated tighter central control.
- Developmental Goals:** UT status intended to improve administrative efficiency, expedite infrastructure, and ensure direct central funding.

Constitutional Basis for State Formation

- Constitutional Provisions:**
 - Article 3 of the Indian Constitution:** Parliament may:
 - Form a new state by separating territory from any state or UT;
 - Unite two or more states or parts of states or UTs;
 - Alter the boundaries or names of existing states;
 - Key Requirements:**
 - A Bill for reorganization needs to be introduced in Parliament only with the President's recommendation;
 - If the proposal affects the area or boundaries of an existing state, the President needs to refer it to that state's legislature for its views;
 - The views of the legislature are not binding; Parliament can proceed regardless.

Sixth Schedule Safeguard

- The Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, under **Article 244(2)** and **Article 275(1)**, provides

for the administration of **tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.**

- It allows for the creation of **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)** and **Regional Councils** with legislative, executive, and financial powers over land, public health, agriculture, and local customs.
- **Government Mandates and Committees:** The MHA constituted a **High Powered Committee (HPC) in 2023**, chaired by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai. The committee's mandate includes:
 - ♦ Exploring constitutional safeguards for Ladakh;
 - ♦ Strengthening the LAHDCs of Leh and Kargil;
 - ♦ Ensuring protection of land, employment, and cultural identity;
 - ♦ Facilitating inclusive development and fast-track recruitment;
- The **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**, in its 119th meeting, recommended that **Ladakh be brought under the Sixth Schedule.**
 - ♦ Ladakh has over 97% of its population belonging to Scheduled Tribes and the need to preserve its agrarian and cultural rights.

Related Concerns & Challenges

- **Political Mandates:** UTs without legislatures lack elected representation and local lawmaking powers.
 - ♦ Decisions are made by centrally appointed administrators, often disconnected from local realities.
- **Cultural and Regional Identity:** UTs with distinct ethnic or tribal populations seek constitutional safeguards and self-governance.
- **Developmental Equity:** Statehood can unlock greater financial devolution and institutional infrastructure.
- **Employment and Representation:** Locals are demanding a Public Service Commission and job reservations to ensure equitable access.
- **Legal and Constitutional Hurdles:** The Sixth Schedule currently applies only to certain northeastern states.
 - ♦ Extending it to a UT like Ladakh would require constitutional amendments and political consensus.
- **Administrative Complexity:** Ladakh already has two LAHDCs in Leh and Kargil. Integrating these with Sixth Schedule provisions would

require careful restructuring to avoid jurisdictional conflicts.

Measures Notified by Union Government for Ladakh

- **Reservation in Government Jobs:** 85% reservation for resident Ladakhis in government employment;
 - ♦ Of this, 80% reserved for STs;
 - ♦ **Additional quotas:** 4% for residents along the LAC and LoC;
 - 1% for SCs; and 10% for EWS;
 - ♦ Total reservation reaches 95%, among the highest in India.
- **Domicile Criteria:** Individuals need to prove 15 years of continuous residence in Ladakh from **October 31, 2019 (the day Ladakh became a UT)**, to qualify as a domicile.
 - ♦ Children of Central government employees, All India Services officers, and PSU staff posted in Ladakh are eligible under specific conditions.
- **Women's Political Representation:** One-third of seats in Ladakh's Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs) reserved for women on a rotational basis.
- **Official Languages:** Ladakh now officially recognizes **English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti, and Purgi.**
 - ♦ It affirms linguistic diversity and cultural preservation.
- **Regulatory Amendments:**
 - ♦ *Ladakh Reservation (Amendment) Regulation, 2025;*
 - ♦ *Ladakh Civil Services Decentralisation and Recruitment (Amendment) Regulation, 2025;*
 - ♦ *Ladakh Official Languages Regulation, 2025;*
 - ♦ *Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (Amendment) Regulation, 2025.*
- These provisions mirror similar protections in northeastern states like Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, where **tribal populations enjoy over 80% reservation** in public employment.

Road Ahead

- While the Constitution provides the legal framework, the transition from UT to statehood is ultimately a political decision. It requires:
 - ♦ Presidential recommendation;
 - ♦ Parliamentary approval through a reorganization bill;
 - ♦ Strategic alignment with national interests and regional aspirations.

Source: TH

RBI'S NEW CO-LENDING RULES

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued revised guidelines to tighten co-lending arrangements between banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), effective **January 1, 2026**.

What is Co-Lending?

- It refers to the **collaborative loan service** where two lending **institutions jointly fund loans** to borrowers.
- This partnership allows both entities to distribute their resources more efficiently, providing customers with the combined expertise and financial muscle of both lenders.
- The RBI introduced the co-origination framework in **2018**, allowing banks and NBFCs to co-originate loans. This framework was later updated in **2020** and renamed the **Co-Lending Model (CLM)**.

Key Highlights of Co-Lending Guidelines

- Mandatory Loan Retention:** All regulated entities (REs) involved in co-lending (banks, NBFCs, etc.) must retain at least 10% of each individual loan on their balance sheet.
- Default Loss Guarantee Cap:** The loan-originating entity can provide a default loss guarantee capped at 5% of the outstanding loan amount.
- Uniform Asset Classification:** If one lender classifies a borrower as a **Special Mention Account (SMA)** or **non-performing asset (NPA)** due to default, the same status must be adopted by the co-lending partner for its share of the exposure.
- Credit Information Sharing:** Both entities must also share relevant credit information on a near real-time basis, and no later than the end of the next working day.
- Internal Policy Requirements:** REs must update their credit policies and prepare dedicated internal guidelines covering; Target borrower segments, Internal portfolio limits, Fee structures, Partner due diligence processes, Customer service protocols, Grievance redressal mechanisms.

Significance of Co-Lending Guidelines

- Improved Transparency:** Clear borrower-level disclosures and uniform NPA classification reduce confusion and misreporting.
- Strengthening Priority Sector Lending (PSL):** It banks to meet PSL targets by partnering with NBFCs and fintechs that have deeper rural and MSME reach.

- Regulatory Discipline:** Near real-time credit information sharing **promotes early detection of stress** and prevents “evergreening” of loans in co-lending portfolios.

Implementation Challenges

- Technology Integration:** Linking multiple lenders' systems for near real-time credit info sharing will be costly and complex.
- Capital Constraints:** Retention requirements may reduce lending appetite in certain sectors, impacting small-ticket loans.
- Operational Coordination:** Ensuring uniform asset classification across different institutions requires process alignment and strong governance frameworks.
- Transition Period Risks:** Existing agreements need renegotiation; and confusion could arise during the transition to the new norms.

Way Ahead

- Gradual Phase-In:** Consider a phased capital retention increase for smaller players to avoid sudden liquidity shocks.
- Regular Audits:** Third-party audits of co-lending arrangements to ensure adherence to asset classification, DLG caps, and retention rules.
- Stakeholder Forums:** Create an industry-RBI working group to address implementation issues promptly during the transition phase.

Source: BS

NEW RULES ON CHEMICALLY CONTAMINATED SITES

Context

- The Environment Ministry has notified the **Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025**, that give a legal structure to a process of addressing chemical contamination.

What are contaminated sites?

- According to the **Central Pollution Control Board**, Contaminated sites are those where **hazardous and other wastes were dumped** historically, leading to the contamination of soil, groundwater, and surface water.
- These sites include** landfills, dumps, waste storage and treatment facilities, spill sites, and chemical waste handling areas.
- There are 103 such sites** identified across India. Remedial action started in only 7 sites using technologies for soil, water, and sediment clean-up.

Need for the rules

- **The Environment Ministry in 2010**, initiated a **Capacity Building Program** for Industrial Pollution Management Project to formulate the **National Program for Remediation of Polluted Sites**. This had **three objectives**:
 - ♦ **Creating an inventory** of probable contaminated sites;
 - ♦ **Developing a guidance document** for assessment and remediation of contaminated sites; and
 - ♦ **Developing a legal, institutional and financial framework** for the remediation of contaminated sites.
- While the first two steps have been in place, the last step, regarding a legal codification, remained unfulfilled.

What are the rules?

- **Initial Assessment:** The **district administration** would prepare half-yearly reports on “**suspected contaminated sites**.”
- **State Pollution Control Board (SPCB), or a ‘reference organisation’** would examine these sites and provide a “**preliminary assessment**” within **90 days** after receiving information from the district.
 - ♦ Following these, it would have another **three months** to make a detailed survey and finalise if these sites were indeed ‘**contaminated**’.
 - ♦ This would involve establishing the levels of suspected hazardous chemicals. There are currently **189** marked ones under the provisions of the **Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016**.
- **Public Notification:** If these sites exceed safe levels, the location of these sites would be publicised and restrictions placed on accessing it.
- **Remediation:** The reference organisation would be tasked with specifying a remediation plan.
 - ♦ The State board would also have **90 days** to identify the person responsible for the contamination.
- **Polluter Pays Principle:** Those deemed responsible would **have to pay for the cost of remediation of the site**, else the Centre and the State would arrange for the costs of clean-up.
- **Any criminal liability**, if it is proved that such contamination caused loss of life or damage, would be under the provisions of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (2023)**.

Exemptions to the rules

- **Radioactive waste**, defined under the Atomic Energy (Safe Disposal of Radioactive Wastes) Rules, 1987,
- **Mining operations**, defined under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957,
- **Marine pollution from oil or oily substances**, as governed by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and the Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil) Rules, 1974,
- **Solid waste from dump sites**, defined under the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Limitations of the rules

- **No fixed timeline** for completion of remediation once a site is confirmed contaminated.
- Several major sources of contamination are outside the scope of these rules.
- **Implementation capacity**, especially technical expertise and funding, remains a challenge for many States.

Way Ahead

- **Dedicated Remediation Fund:** Create a national Contaminated Site Remediation Fund financed through environmental cess and penalties.
- **Public Participation:** Involve local communities in monitoring and reporting, ensuring transparency.
- **Land Use Planning:** After remediation, promote safe reuse of land for non-sensitive activities like renewable energy parks.

Source: TH

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHED REPORT ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN INDIA

Context

- NITI Aayog launched the Report on ‘**Unlocking a \$200 Billion Opportunity: Electric Vehicles in India**’.
- ♦ This report offers a timely and comprehensive review of current challenges, alongside actionable recommendations to fast-track the EV transition in India.

Major Highlights

- **The key objectives of India’s EV Push:**
 - ♦ Reduced dependence on imported fuel;
 - ♦ Increased share of renewable energy by leveraging the storage capacity of EV batteries;
 - ♦ Reduced Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions;

- ♦ Improved air quality;
- ♦ Improved Plant Load Factor (PLF) of electricity generating plants;
- ♦ Becoming a leader in a rapidly growing global market.
- **Goal:** India seeks to attain a 30% share of electric vehicles, in the total vehicles sold, by 2030.
- **Adoption of EVs:** Sales of EVs in India went up from 50,000 in 2016 to 2.08 million in 2024 as against global EV sales having risen from 918,000 in 2016 to 18.78 million in 2024.
 - ♦ Adoption of EV has been increasing in India but has been slower than the pace in some of the leading countries like the US, EU and China.
- **India's Progress:** India has progressed to only about 7.6 % of the sales in 2024 being electric, which is far behind its target of 30% by 2030.
 - ♦ Thus, it has taken nearly 10 years to reach a penetration level of 7.6% and now needs to increase this share by over 22% in the next 5 years alone.

Challenges

- There are challenges of financing vehicles, especially electric buses and electric trucks.
- Inadequacy of charging facilities on one hand and low utilization of existing public charging facilities on the other hand.
- Lack of adequate awareness regarding EV performance among public and private stakeholders.
- Inadequate data and regulatory gaps hinder evidence-based decision making.

Strategy for Accelerating EV Adoption in India

- **Moving from incentives to Mandates:** Announce a clear policy, with target timelines, for Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) adoption.
 - ♦ Design a progressively more stringent plan for mandating the production and purchase of EVs and disincentivising the continued use/production of ICE vehicles.
- **Saturation instead of thin distribution:** Design and start a saturation program to support 5 cities over 5 years.
 - ♦ Have entities in the States to manage this program.
 - ♦ Scale up to 20 cities and then to 100 cities.
- **Enable financing for e-Buses and e-Trucks:** Create a pooled fund with contributions from the public budget and multilateral.

- ♦ Design and launch an appropriate scheme to channel the funds.
- **Scale up research for new battery technologies:** Set up an academia-industry-government partnership for accelerating research on new battery chemistries.
- **Strategic scaling of charging infrastructure:** Identify 20 high density corridors for e-Bus and e-Truck operations and commission a study to identify strategic locations for charging hubs based on current voltage patterns on these corridors.
 - ♦ Establish nodal agencies in each state to facilitate and enable more charging stations to be established.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT

KODALI KARUPPUR SILK SARI

Context

- The **Kodali Karuppur silk sari**, a luxurious garment once favoured by the Maratha kings of Thanjavur is now witnessing a steep decline in its traditional handloom weavers.

About

- It derives its name from **Karuppur, a village near Kumbakonam** in the **Thanjavur (Tanjore) region of Tamil Nadu**.
- These are **handwoven** silk saris, dhotis, and furnishings of Karuppur that combined hand painting, block printing, and brocade-weaving.
- They were popular up to the **19th Century**.
 - ♦ In some Maratha states like Baroda, Kohlapur and Satara, the Karuppur sari was an essential part of the bride's trousseau, as was the Karuppur turban for the groom
- The Kodali Karuppur saree does not currently have a GI (Geographical Indication) tag.



Source: TH

MERITE SCHEME

In News

- The Union Cabinet approved the Multidisciplinary Education and Research improvement in Technical Education (MERITE) Scheme in technical institutions across India.

MERITE Scheme

- It is a **central Sector Scheme** which has a budget of ₹4,200 crore for 2025-30, including a **₹2,100 crore World Bank loan**.
- It aligns **with NEP-2020** to enhance quality, equity, and governance and will be managed via a Central Nodal Agency.
- It **focuses on improving student employability** through updated curricula, internships, faculty training, research hubs, and innovation centers, aiming to increase placements and reduce unemployment among engineering graduates.
- It will support **275 government technical institutions**, including NITs, state engineering colleges, polytechnics, and technical universities, along with State/UT education departments.
 - Prestigious institutions like IITs, IIMs, and regulatory bodies will aid implementation.

Source: TH

SCHEME FOR 23RD NATIONAL AWARDS FOR E-GOVERNANCE (NAEG) 2026

Context

- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) issued the scheme guidelines for the 23rd National Awards for e-Governance (NAEG) 2026.

About

- The National Awards for e-Governance are **presented annually** to honor and encourage excellence in implementing e-Governance initiatives.
- Nominations** for National Awards for e-Governance 2026 can be submitted under **7 Categories**:
 - Government Process Re-engineering** by use of technology for Digital Transformation,
 - Innovation by Use of AI** and other new age technologies for providing Citizen-Centric Services,
 - Best e-Gov. Practices/Innovation in Cyber Security,
 - District Level Initiatives in e-Governance,

- Grassroots Level Initiatives** by Gram Panchayats or equivalent Traditional Local Bodies for Deepening/ Widening of Service Delivery,
- Replication and Scaling of Nationally Awarded and Mission-mode, e-Governance Projects by State/UTs/Districts,
- Digital transformation by use of data analytics in digital platforms by Central Ministries/ States/ UTs.
- The NAEG Awards 2026 will comprise; **a trophy, a certificate, and an incentive of ₹10 lakh** for each Gold Awardee and **₹5 lakh** for each Silver Awardee.
 - A total of 16 awards will be conferred, including 10 Gold Awards and 6 Silver Awards.
- The incentive will be awarded to the respective district/organization for use in project or programme implementation or to bridge resource gaps in any area of public welfare.

Source: PIB

SLEEPING SICKNESS

Context

- WHO has announced that **Kenya has eliminated sleeping sickness** as a public health problem.

About the Sleeping Sickness

- It is a vector-borne disease, also known as **Human African Trypanosomiasis (HAT)**, and is endemic in sub-Saharan Africa.
- It is caused by **protozoans** of the genus Trypanosoma, transmitted to humans by bites of **tsetse flies** (glossina) which have acquired the parasites from infected humans or animals.
- Rural populations dependent on **agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry or hunting** are deemed most at risk of exposure.
- Symptoms** include fever, headaches, joint pain, and, in advanced stages, neurological symptoms like confusion, disrupted sleep patterns, and behavioral changes.
- Without treatment, it is generally **fatal**. Common treatments include **Pentamidine and Nifurtimox**.

Source: AIR

INDIA'S FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND STATE-OF-THE-ART ANIMAL STEM CELL BIOBANK

In News

- India's first-of-its-kind state-of-the-art Animal Stem Cell Biobank and Animal Stem Cell Laboratory opened at the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB), Hyderabad.

Stem cells

- They are special cells capable of developing into various cell types in the body and play a key role in repair and regeneration.
- There are **two principal types of stem cells: embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells.**
 - ♦ **Embryonic stem cells** are derived from early-stage embryos and are pluripotent, meaning they have the remarkable ability to develop into any cell type found in the human body.
 - ♦ The **adult stem cells** are found in various tissues throughout the body, such as bone marrow or skin. These cells are generally multipotent, so they can develop into a limited range of cell types related to their tissue of origin.

India's first Animal Stem Cell Biobank and Laboratory

- The cutting-edge facility of Animal BioBank, spread over 9,300 sq ft and constructed at a cost of ₹1.85 crore.
- It will focus on **regenerative medicine** and **cellular therapies for livestock.**
- **It is equipped** with a stem cell culture unit, 3D bioprinter, bacterial culture lab, cryostorage, autoclave rooms, advanced air handling systems, and uninterrupted power backup.
- It is supported by the **National Biopharma Mission (NBM)** of DBT-BIRAC.

Relevance

- It aligns with **PM Modi's BioE3 policy**, positioning India as a leader in biotechnology innovation.
- It will advance research in disease modelling, tissue engineering, and reproductive biotechnology.
 - ♦ It will be expanded to enable biobanking of animal stem cells and their derivatives.

Do you know?

- The **National Biopharma Mission (NBM)-Innovate in India (I3)** is an Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission for Accelerating Discovery Research for development of Biopharmaceuticals.
- BIRAC has the mandate to enable and nurture an ecosystem for preparing India's technological and product development capabilities in bio pharmaceuticals, vaccines, biosimilars, medical devices and diagnostics.
 - ♦ The project was sanctioned with a total cost US\$ 250 million which is 50% co-funded by the World Bank.

Source : PIB

KALESHWARAM PROJECT**Context**

- The Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP), is mired in controversies over the manner in which it has been conceived and executed.

About

- **Location:** The **Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP)** is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the **Godavari River** in Kaleshwaram, Bhupalpally, **Telangana.**
 - ♦ The project starts at the confluence point of **Pranahita River and Godavari River.**
- **Infrastructure:** It utilises a canal network of more than **1,800 km** and is the **world's largest** multi-stage irrigation project.
 - ♦ The **barrages** were constructed across Godavari at **Ramadugu, Medigadda, Sundilla and Annaram.**
- **The objective** of the project includes providing irrigation water to a large area of agricultural land, and meeting the drinking water requirements.

Lift Irrigation Projects

- **In lift irrigation projects**, water is not transported by gravity.
- Instead, it is lifted using pumps or surge pools to a main delivery chamber at the highest point of the project, from where it is distributed to the fields for irrigation.

Source: TH

WORLD LION DAY**Context**

- On World Lion Day (**August 10**), Gujarat celebrated a record **891 Asiatic lions**, as per the 2025 Lion Census, with over half living outside Gir.

Asiatic Lion (Panthera leo persica)

- It is one of the **five big cat species** found in India.
- **Physical Characteristics:** Asiatic lions are slightly **smaller than African lions.**
 - ♦ Males have **less developed manes**, leaving their ears visible.
 - ♦ Prominent **longitudinal fold of skin** along the belly (a distinguishing feature from African lions).
- **Distribution:** In India, concentrated in the state of Gujarat in and around the Gir Forest mainly in;
 - ♦ Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary
 - ♦ Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary
 - ♦ Mityala Wildlife Sanctuary
 - ♦ Barda Wildlife Sanctuary
- **Conservation Status:**
 - ♦ **IUCN Red List status:** Endangered
 - ♦ **CITES:** Appendix I
 - ♦ **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I

Source: AIR