# NEXT IAS

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

**Time:** 45 Min

**Date:** 25-09-2025

## Table of Content

# LADAKH STATEHOOD PROTESTS

## Context

- Violent youth protests in Ladakh demanding **statehood and Sixth Schedule** status have led to four deaths and over 30 injuries.
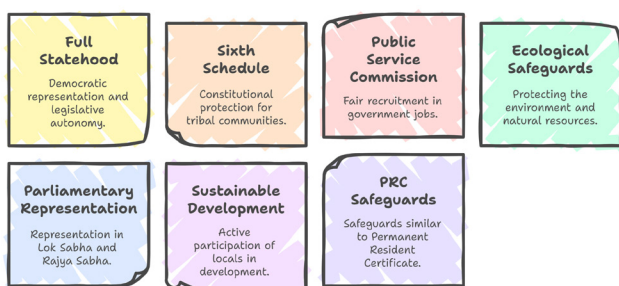
## Background: From UT Status to Unrest

- **August 2019**: Ladakh was separated from Jammu & Kashmir and made a Union Territory without a legislature, unlike Jammu & Kashmir.
    - Initially, many Ladakhis welcomed the move, hoping for better governance and development.
    - However, the absence of legislative power and fears of demographic change soon led to disillusionment.
- The **Leh Apex Body (LAB)** and **Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)** emerged as key voices, representing **both Buddhist and Muslim communities across Leh and Kargil.**

## Key Reasons for the Protests

- **Lack of Legislative Power:** Ladakhis lost representation in the J&K Assembly and Legislative Council.
    - The **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs)** have limited authority, mostly restricted to spending development funds.
- **Fear of Demographic and Cultural Erosion:** Locals worry that opening Ladakh to outside investment could alter its **fragile ecology and cultural identity.**
    - Large-scale **solar and industrial projects** are being planned without local consent, raising concerns about **land rights and displacement.**
- **Employment and Land Rights:** There is growing demand for a **Ladakh Resident Certificate** to protect local jobs and land ownership — similar to protections once offered **under Article 35A.**

## Core Demands



## Government Response & Measures

- **Dialogue and High-Powered Committees:** The Union Home Ministry (MHA) set up a **High-Powered Committee (HPC)** to engage with protest leaders from the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA). 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

> **Geography of Ladakh**
> - It is a **high-altitude cold desert**, lying in the **rain shadow of the Himalayas.**
> - It is dominated by three major mountain ranges like **Zanskar Range, Ladakh Range and Karakoram Range.**
> - **Major Mountain Passes:** Khardung La and Chang La
> - **Major Rivers:** Indus, Nubra, Shyok, and Zanskar
> - It shares its **international borders** with **China** (North & East); **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir** (Northwest); and Afghanistan.
> - It is the **2nd largest district** in India after Kutch in Gujarat.
> - It falls under **Seismic Zone IV** (high earthquake risk).

**Source: TH**

# PERSONALITY RIGHTS

### Context

- **The Delhi High Court** has recently issued a **series of orders** protecting the **personality rights of Bollywood celebrities** from unauthorised commercial use.

### What are Personality Rights?

- **Personality rights** refer to the **right of a person to protect his/her personality** under the **right to privacy or property.**
  - These could include **a pose, a mannerism or any aspect of their personality.**
- These rights are important to celebrities as their **names, photographs or even voices** can easily be misused in various advertisements by different companies to boost their sales.
- Many celebrities even register some aspects as a trademark to use them commercially.
  - For example, **Usain Bolt's "bolting"** or lightning pose is a registered trademark.

### Reasons for providing these Rights

- The idea is that **only the owner** of these distinct features has the r**ight to derive any commercial benefit from it.**

- **Exclusivity** is a big factor in attracting commercial dividends for celebrities.

- Personality rights are not expressly mentioned in a Laws in India but **fall under the right to privacy.**

### Legality of Personality Rights

- Celebrities can move the Court and **seek an injunction** when an unauthorised third party uses their personality rights for commercial purposes.

- Personality rights or their protection are not expressly mentioned in a statute in India but are traced to fall under the **right to privacy (Article 21).**

- **Many concepts in intellectual property rights** used in protection of **trademarks** such as passing off, deception can be applied while deciding whether a celebrity deserves to be protected through an injunction.

### Conclusion

- India's courts are increasingly recognising personality rights to protect individuals from digital misuse, including AI-generated content.

- While protections are expanding, they must balance free speech, artistic expression, and privacy, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive legislation.

**Source: TH**

# GLOBAL SOUTH MUST WORK TOGETHER: EAM

### Context

- At the sidelines of the **80th UN General Assembly session in New York**, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called for **stronger Global South solidarity** and a **collective push for UN reforms.**

### About

- He called for a **united approach among Global South countries,** based on fair and transparent economic practices, resilient supply chains, and stronger South-South trade, investment, and technology collaboration.

- Positioned India as a bridge between developed nations and the **Global South**, highlighting its leadership in initiatives like **Voice of Global South Summit (2023) and G20 Presidency (2023).**

### Global South

- The term **"Global South"** was coined by **Carl Oglesby**, an American political activist, in **1969.**
    - He used the term to describe **countries suffering from political and economic exploitation** by developed nations of the Global North.
- In the simplest sense, Global South refers to the countries of **Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania.**
    - Most of these countries, where **about 85% of the world population lives**, **experienced colonial rule** and historically lagged in achieving substantial levels of industrialisation.



- According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**, Global South countries typically exhibit lower levels of development, higher income inequality, rapid population growth, agrarian-dominant economies, lower quality of life, shorter life expectancy, and significant external dependence.

### Challenges Faced by Global South

- **Economic:** According to World Bank data (2023), the average GDP per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa was approximately $1,623, compared to $79,640 in North America.
    - This stark disparity underscores the **economic challenges faced by the Global South.**
- **Dependency on Agriculture:** Economies in these regions often rely heavily on agriculture and raw material exports, making them particularly vulnerable to global market fluctuations.
- **Infrastructural Challenges:** Such as poor infrastructure, inadequate healthcare, and limited educational opportunities further exacerbate economic disparities.

- **Post-colonial legacies continue to manifest in various ways**, including persistent socio-economic disparities, systemic corruption, and political instability.
- **Political Challenges:** Many Global South nations contend with challenges related to governance, corruption, and internal conflicts, with autocratic regimes complicating their development trajectories and international standing.

### Significance of Global South in the World Order

- **Demographic Significance:** The Global South accounts for the majority of the world's population, with many nations experiencing a demographic dividend—a young and growing population that drives innovation, labor force expansion, and consumer demand.
- **Economic Hubs:** The Global South contributes approximately 40% of global trade, half of the world's manufacturing output, and a substantial portion of high-tech products.
    - The rapid urbanization and rising middle class in these nations are also creating new markets for goods and services, further solidifying their influence in the global economy.
- **Shaping Multipolarity in World Order:** Counters North-South divide and challenges unipolar dominance.
    - These countries act as a balancing force in US-China rivalry and other power competitions.

### Why has India Emerged as a Voice for the Global South?

- **Historical Role:** India has long championed the cause of developing nations with Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Bandung Conference (1955), and G77 through the Cold War representing the collective interests of the Global South countries.
    - The civilisational ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (world is one family) aligns with Global South solidarity.
- **Economic Rise & Development Experience:** India has emerged as the 4th largest economy of the world and is the fastest-growing major economy which inspires other Global South nations.
    - India's own journey from aid-recipient to aid-donor & development partner makes it relatable.

- **Climate & Global Justice Advocacy:** India has been a Vocal advocate of climate justice and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR).

  - It leads in renewable energy, green growth, lifestyle for environment (LiFE), which resonates with Global South priorities.

- **Diplomatic & Multilateral Role:** During India's G20 Presidency (2023) India placed Global South at the centre by initiating Voice of the Global South Summit.

  - India championed inclusion of the African Union as a permanent G20 member.

- **Strategic Autonomy & Trusted Voice:** India follows an independent foreign policy which is not aligned to any bloc trusted by both West and Global South.

  - The presence of a strong Indian diaspora in Global North also amplifies Global South concerns globally.

### Challenges Faced by the India

- **Domestic Development Gaps:** Despite being the 4th largest economy, India still faces poverty, unemployment, health, education deficits.

- **Resource & Financial Constraints:** India has a limited capacity to provide large-scale aid, concessional finance, or infrastructure investments compared to China.

  - South-South cooperation needs sustained financial support, which strains India's budget.

- **Geopolitical Pressures:** India has to balance its ties with the USA, EU, Russia, China while representing the Global South.

  - Western bloc may resist reforms in the IMF, UNSC, WTO where India champions Global South demands.

  - The Strategic rivalries between US–China, Russia–West pull Global South in different directions, reducing India's influence.

- **Competition with China:** China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and large financial outlays give it greater leverage in Africa, Asia, Latin America.

  - Many Global South countries perceive China as a more immediate development partner due to its financial clout.

- **Security & Stability Concerns:** Regional tensions with Pakistan & China, terrorism, and border disputes distract India's focus from global leadership.

### Initiatives by India for Global South

- **The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM),** established in 1961, played a pivotal role in the political landscape of the Global South during the Cold War.

  - NAM sought to provide a platform for countries that did not align with either the United States or the Soviet Union, advocating for national sovereignty, non-intervention, and peaceful coexistence.

  - NAM's significance extended beyond the Cold War, as it continued to champion the interests of the Global South in the international arena.

- **Voice of the Global South Summit:** First-of-its-kind initiative where 125+ countries participated. India projected their concerns on debt, climate, food, energy, and digital divide.

- **UN Reforms Advocacy:** Strong push for UNSC expansion to include Africa, Latin America, and Asia representation.

- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Export:** Sharing India's UPI, Aadhaar, CoWIN model with Global South nations.

- **Vaccine Maitri (2020–21):** India supplied COVID-19 vaccines to 100+ Global South countries.

- **Lines of Credit & Grants:** $30+ billion committed for infrastructure, connectivity, power, and agriculture projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

### Conclusion

- The recent resurgence of the Global South reflects the **evolving geopolitical landscape** and the growing influence of developing nations in global affairs.

- India's leadership exemplifies this transition through its championing of the interests of the Global South and advocating for a recalibration of the global economic and political order.

**Source: TH**

# CSIR SCHEME ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (CBHRD)

## Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) / Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Scheme on **"Capacity Building and Human Resource Development (CBHRD)".**
  - The scheme will have a total financial outlay of **Rs. 2,277.397 crore** for the Fifteenth Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).

## About the Scheme

- **Implementation:** Managed by CSIR, the scheme will cover all R&D institutions, national laboratories, Institutes of National Importance, Institutes of Eminence, and universities across India.
- **Objective:** To provide a structured platform for young researchers to build careers in universities, industry, national R&D laboratories, and academic institutions.
- **Focus Areas:** The initiative targets growth in Science, Technology & Engineering, Medical, and Mathematical Sciences (STEMM).
- The CBHRD scheme consolidates **four sub-schemes:**
  - **Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships:** Support for young researchers pursuing advanced studies.
  - **Extramural Research Scheme, Emeritus Scientist Scheme, and Bhatnagar Fellowship Programme:** Encouraging research excellence and mentorship.
  - **Promotion and Recognition of Excellence through Award Schemes:** Recognizing outstanding contributions in science and technology.
  - **Knowledge Sharing through Travel and Symposia Grant Schemes:** Facilitating exposure to global research environments and collaborative opportunities.

## Government Initiatives to Promote Innovation

- **Impacting Research Innovation & Technology (IMPRINT):** Encourages research and innovation in various engineering and technology domains.

- **VigyanDhara Scheme:** Operationalised to strengthen India's **STI ecosystem** by enhancing **S&T infrastructure**, developing well-equipped **R&D labs in academic institutions**, and promoting research in **critical sectors**.
- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):** It was set up by **NITI Aayog in 2016** to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in India. AIM has created **four programs** to support these functions:
  - Atal Tinkering Labs
  - Atal Incubation Centers
  - Atal New India Challenges and Atal Grand Challenges
  - Mentor India.
- **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF),** seeks to create a unified research ecosystem bridging science, humanities, and social sciences.
- **Research parks** at IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Kanpur, IIT Chennai, have been established which provide an interface between entrepreneurship and Industry to establish their R&D units in collaboration with students & faculty members of the IITs.

## India's Progress

- **Global Standing:**
  - India secured the **39th position** among 133 global economies in the **Global Innovation Index 2024**, marking a significant improvement from its 81st rank in 2015.
  - India is now among the **top three countries globally** in terms of scientific paper publications, according to data from the National Science Foundation (NSF), USA.
- **Growth in Startups:** India has emerged as the **third-largest startup ecosystem** globally, with over 1.92 lakh startups, up from just 500 in 2014. This growth is attributed to supportive policies and a vibrant innovation landscape.

## Challenges

- **Funding Constraints:** Despite robust government support, private sector investment in R&D in India remains limited compared to global benchmarks, constraining large-scale innovation.

- **Talent Retention Challenges:** The brain drain persists, as skilled researchers are often drawn abroad by better infrastructure, funding, and career advancement opportunities.

- **Global Competitiveness:** India must accelerate its capabilities in frontier technologies such as quantum computing, artificial intelligence, deep-tech, and biotechnology to maintain and enhance its global standing.

### Way Ahead

- India's concerted efforts in strengthening its research and innovation ecosystem reflect a strategic vision to become a global leader in science and technology.

- Continued focus on **talent retention, technology commercialization, and global partnerships** will ensure that India not only addresses national challenges but also contributes significantly to global scientific progress, driving sustainable growth and technological self-reliance.

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**Council of Scientific and Industrial Research(CSIR)**

- **CSIR is a R&D organization** known for its cutting edge R&D knowledge base in diverse S&T areas.

- **It was established** as an autonomous body in **1942** and Headquartered in **New Delhi.**

- CSIR has a dynamic network of **37 national laboratories, 39 outreach centers, 1 Innovation Complexes,** and three units with a pan-India presence.

- **The CSIR laboratories** specialize in topics ranging from the genome to geology, food to fuel, minerals to materials, and so on.

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**Source: PIB**

## KARNATAKA HC REJECTS X CORP'S CENSORSHIP PLEA

### Context

- The Karnataka High Court dismissed a petition filed by X Corp challenging the Indian government's use of **Section 79(3)(b)** of the **Information Technology Act, 2000** and the Sahyog Portal for content takedown orders.

### About

- The company had argued that the powers exercised under **Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000** were unconstitutional and that only **Section 69A,** along with the **IT (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009**, provided the lawful framework for content takedown.

- **Section 79(3)(b)** of **India's Information Technology Act, 2000**, removes the "safe harbor" protection for intermediaries when they fail to take down unlawful content after receiving actual knowledge or a government notification about it.

### What is the Court ruling?

- The court emphasised that **information and communication have never been left unchecked,** regardless of the medium.

- It cautioned against importing American free speech jurisprudence into the Indian constitutional context. The judgment reaffirmed that **unlawful or illegal content does not enjoy the same protection** as legitimate speech.

### Need for Regulating Digital/Commercial Speech

- **Protecting vulnerable groups:** Derogatory remarks against persons with disabilities, minorities, or women perpetuate stigma.
  - Regulations can ensure inclusivity and dignity in public discourse.

- **Accountability of influencers:** Influencers and comedians earn from monetised platforms. Their speech is not purely private; it is a public service with commercial stakes.
  - Guidelines can create responsibility proportional to reach and influence.

- **Preventing harm and disorder:** Fake news, hate speech, and derogatory jokes can trigger violence or social unrest, reasonable limits may prevent escalation.

- **Aligning with global trends:** EU's Digital Services Act and UK's Online Safety Act already regulate harmful online content.
  - India cannot remain unregulated when speech directly affects millions of internet users.

**Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression**

- **Article 19(2) of the Indian Constitution** deals with the reasonable restrictions that can be placed on the **fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a).**

- **Conditions under which speech can be restricted by the state:**
  - Security of the State, Public Order, Decency or Morality, Contempt of Court, Defamation, Incitement to Offense.

- **Right to Take Offense:** Article 19(2) of the Constitution does not recognise offensive speech as a distinct category.
  - Therefore, the notion of a right to take offence lies beyond the ambit of constitutionally permissible limitations.

- **Constitutional Morality:** It's a nuanced, evolving concept, not an inherent sentiment.
  - Must be cultivated and developed over time.

**Source: HT**

# NEWS IN SHORT

## SUPER TYPHOON RAGASA

### In News

- **Super Typhoon Ragasa** has caused widespread devastation **across East Asia.**

### About

- A super typhoon is a very violent storm, equivalent to a **Category 5 hurricane, packing winds of 253km/h (157 mph).**
  - Typhoons, including a super typhoon, generally form in the West Pacific, close to places like China, Japan, and the Philippines.

- Tropical cyclones like **super typhoons** are warm-core low-pressure systems that exhibit a spiral inflow near the ocean surface and a spiral outflow at the upper levels of the atmosphere.

- They typically develop at **latitudes greater than 5°** away from the equator to benefit from the Coriolis force necessary for rotation.

### Terminology for Tropical Cyclones by Region

- **Hurricane:** Occurs in the North Atlantic, Eastern North Pacific, and South Pacific Oceans.

- **Cyclone:** Found in the Indian Ocean.

- **Typhoon:** Develops in the Western North Pacific Ocean.

- **Willy-willy:** Term used in the eastern part of the Southern Indian Ocean for tropical cyclones.
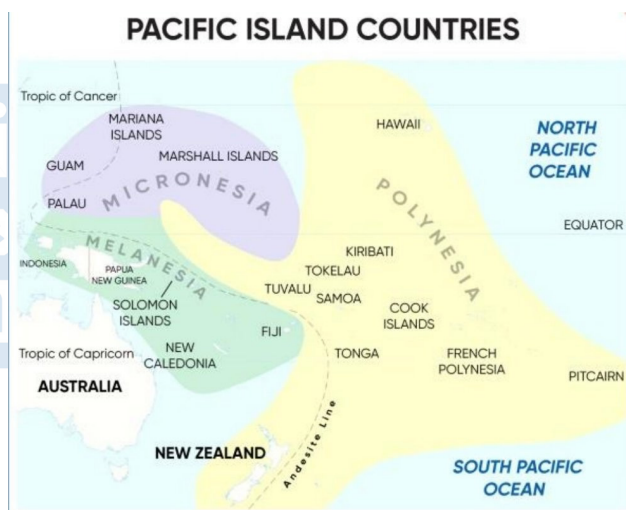
**Source :IE**

## FIPIC

### In News

- External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar, hosted a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) in New York.

### About FIPIC

- FIPIC is a multilateral grouping launched by India in 2014 to enhance cooperation between India and 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs).



PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

- Countries include: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

- FIPIC aims to strengthen cooperation in areas such as politics, economy, trade, investment, culture, health, education, infrastructure, and disaster management.

- FIPIC also offers India a platform to advance South-South Cooperation, strengthen its global south credibility, and secure support in multilateral forums such as the United Nations.

**Source: AIR**

# AUTISM MYTHS AROUND TYLENOL

## Context

- US President Donald Trump recently claimed that **Tylenol (paracetamol/ acetaminophen)** use during pregnancy may cause autism and suggested limiting its use.

## What is Tylenol?

- It is a brand name for **acetaminophen, or paracetamol,** which is used as a pain reliever and a fever reducer.
- An over-the-counter medication, it is used to **alleviate headaches, muscle aches, arthritis** and used to manage symptoms of colds and flu.
  - Over-the-counter medicines refers to medicines that can be bought directly from a pharmacy **without a doctor's prescription.**

## What is Autism?

- **Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD),** is a lifelong **neurodevelopmental** condition affecting how a person communicates, interacts socially, and behaves.
- **The term "spectrum"** reflects the wide variation in symptoms and their severity, with individuals experiencing autism differently and requiring varying levels of support.
- **Key Characteristics:** Persistent difficulties in social-communication and interaction, and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior or interests.
  - Many autistic people experience **differences in how they process sensory information,** finding certain sounds, lights, or textures overwhelming or uncomfortable.

**Source: IE**

# EC LAUNCHES E-SIGN FEATURE FOR CORRECTION OF VOTER NAMES

## In News

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a **new e-sign feature on its ECINET portal and app** to verify their identity using **Aadhaar-linked phone numbers.**

## About ECINET Portal

- ECINET is a unified digital platform developed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to streamline and simplify various electoral processes.

- It aims to serve as a single-point interface for all election-related services, integrating and subsuming over 40 existing mobile and web applications such as the Voter Helpline App, cVIGIL, Suvidha 2.0, and others.

**Source: PIB**

# K VISA

## Context

- From October 1, 2025, China is going to introduce the K Visa program to attract young science and technology professionals from across the globe.

## Key Features of the K Visa

- **No Sponsor Required:** Applicants do not need a Chinese employer or sponsor.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** Open to young foreign professionals holding at least a bachelor's degree in STEM from recognised institutions in China or abroad.
- **Inclusive Scope:** Covers those engaged in professional education or research at accredited universities and research institutions.
- **Flexible Stay Options:** Greater convenience in entries, validity, and duration of stay.
- **Wide-Ranging Activities Permitted:** Holders may pursue education, scientific research, cultural exchanges, entrepreneurship, and business opportunities.

## Significance of the K Visa

- The K visa is being seen as an extension of the **R visa** for high-level talent introduced by China in **2013.**
- The move comes at a time when the United States is tightening its H-1B visa regime, introducing steep filing fees of up to $100,000 for employers beginning with the 2026 application season.
- **It reflects China's broader ambition to;**
  - Reposition itself as a global hub for science and technology.
  - Shift the balance of talent flows, offering a credible alternative to traditional destinations like the US.

**Source: IE**

## CABINET APPROVES PACKAGE TO REVITALIZE INDIA'S SHIPBUILDING AND MARITIME SECTOR

### In News

- The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹69,725 crore Shipbuilding Package, India's largest intervention to boost its maritime industry, with the aim of making India a top 5 global shipbuilding nation by 2047.

### Four Pillars of Strategy

- **Strengthening Domestic Capacity:** Modernization and expansion of shipbuilding & repair clusters (greenfield + brownfield).

- **Long-Term Financing:** Creation of a ₹25,000 crore Maritime Development Fund with Maritime Investment & Incentivization Funds for affordable long-tenor financing.

- **Accelerating Shipyard Development:** Revamped Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS) till 2036 (₹24,736 crore) and Shipbreaking Credit Note (₹4,001 crore) for eco-friendly recycling.

- **Enhancing Technical Capabilities & Policy Reforms:** Skilling, ship design R&D, risk coverage, and regulatory reforms under a new National Shipbuilding Mission.

### Significance

- The government expects the package to:

- Unlock ₹4.5 lakh crore investments and spur the production of over 2,500 new vessels, fundamentally altering India's share in global shipping.

- Create 30 lakh jobs spanning manufacturing, repair, logistics, and allied sectors, with a positive multiplier effect on regional and national economies.

- Strengthen national, energy, and food security by reducing reliance on foreign-owned shipping and supporting resilient supply chains.

- By 2047, the package seeks to position India among the top 5 shipbuilding nations, up from under 1% of current global market share.

Source: PIB

## UNIFIED PAYMENTS INTERFACE

### In News

- NPCI International Payments Ltd, in partnership with Qatar National Bank, has enabled the acceptance of QR code-based Unified Payments Interface (UPI) across Qatar.

### About Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- It is India's real-time instant payment system, developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** in 2016.

- Through this, users can link and manage several bank accounts within one UPI-enabled app (such as Google Pay, PhonePe, Paytm, BHIM).

- Works on **Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) infrastructure.**

- UPI has become the **world's largest real-time payment system**. In 2024, UPI processed over 12 billion transactions monthly, accounting for over 65% of retail digital payments in India.

- Accepted internationally in countries like **UAE, Nepal, Bhutan, France, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, etc.**

Source: TH

## FINANCE MINISTER LAUNCHES GST APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

### In News

- The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs formally launched the **Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)** in New Delhi.

> **Do you know?**
> - GST (Goods and Services Tax) is a single indirect tax on the supply of goods and services across India. It replaces multiple taxes like excise, VAT, and service tax, creating one unified market.

### Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

- It is a **statutory appellate body established under the Goods and Services Tax laws.**

- It has been constituted to h**ear appeals against orders passed by the GST Appellate Authorities** and to provide taxpayers with an independent forum for justice.

- It will function through a **Principal Bench in New Delhi** and 31 State Benches across 45 locations in India, thereby ensuring accessibility and nationwide reach.

- ◆ Each Bench of the GSTAT will comprise two Judicial Members, one Technical Member (Centre), and one Technical Member (State), ensuring a balanced composition of judicial expertise and technical knowledge from both Central and State administrations.

**Source** :TH

# NIGHTMARE BACTERIA

## Context

- According to a recent report by the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), infection rates from drug-resistant "nightmare bacteria" have risen by 70% between 2019 and 2023 in the United States.

### What is 'Nightmare Bacteria'?

- **Nightmare Bacteria** is a term which mostly refers to the bacteria group known as **Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE).**

  - ◆ It includes pathogens such as **Escherichia coli** and **Klebsiella pneumoniae.**

- When all other options have been exhausted, these bacteria are resistant to the **antibiotics carbapenems**, which are frequently reserved for severe infections.

  - ◆ **Antimicrobial resistance** occurs when germs such as bacteria and fungi gain the power to fight off the drugs designed to kill them.

- **The primary factor** behind the recent rise in the US is the spread of bacteria carrying the **NDM gene (New Delhi metallo-ß-lactamase)**, which enables them to block the effects of multiple antibiotic medications by neutralising them.

**Source: IT**

# KALAIMAMANI AWARDS

## Context

- The Tamil Nadu government announced the **Kalaimamani Awards** for the years **2021, 2022 and 2023**.

## About

- The Kalaimamani awards are considered to be the **highest civilian honor in the state of Tamil Nadu.**

- These awards are handed out by the Tamil Nadu **'Iyal Isai Nataka Mandram'(literature, music, and theatre),** a unit of the Directorate of Art and Culture, Government of Tamil Nadu.

- **The various categories of Kalaimamani awards include:** music (vocal), Thevaram recital, performing mrithangam, harmonium, nathaswaram, thavil, religious discourse, Bharathanatyam teaching, drama artist, folk singer, Valli Oyil Kummi, small screen actor, painter, etc.

- **Eligibility:** Top-most performing talent from the state who have made invaluable contributions to the betterment of their respective fields.

- **The Kalaimamani awardees** will be honoured with a **gold medal and a shield.**

**Source: IE**

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