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FOREIGN MINISTER OF AFGHANISTAN VISITED INDIA

Context

- Afghanistan's Taliban foreign minister met external affairs minister S. Jaishankar in New Delhi.

About

- It is the **first high-level diplomatic engagement** between India and the Taliban regime since it took power in 2021.
- His visit follows participation in a **regional meeting on Afghanistan in Russia,** attended by representatives from India, China, Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asian countries.

India–Taliban Diplomatic Engagement

- **Assurance for Terror Concerns:** Afghanistan reassured India that it would not allow any group to use its territory against another country—a key security assurance relevant to India's concerns over terrorism emanating from Afghan soil.
- **India's Embassy Reopening:** External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced that India would reopen its full embassy in Kabul, upgrading the existing technical mission that was set up in 2022 for humanitarian and trade purposes.
- **Diplomatic Context:** Around a dozen countries — including China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey — already operate embassies in Kabul.
  - India's decision to reopen its embassy underscores a calibrated re-engagement strategy to protect its strategic and economic interests.

Significance

- **Strategic Balance:** The move reflects India's pragmatic approach to maintain influence in Afghanistan amid Pakistan and China's growing presence.
- **Counterterrorism Focus:** India's emphasis on Afghan soil not being used for terrorism directly addresses concerns about groups like LeT and JeM.
- **Diplomatic Recognition:** While India has not officially recognized the Taliban government, the engagement indicates de facto acknowledgment of its control over Kabul.
- **Regional Cooperation:** India's participation in regional formats (like the Moscow Format) underscores its multi-layered approach to Afghan stability.

Why is India Engaging with Taliban Regime in Afghanistan?

- **Strategic Realism and Geopolitical Relevance:** Taliban's complete control over Afghanistan since 2021 makes it the de facto authority; engagement is necessary to protect India's interests.
  - Ignoring Kabul would cede ground to Pakistan and China, both of which have strong influence in the region.
  - Engagement ensures that India remains a relevant regional actor in shaping Afghanistan's future.
- **Security Concerns:** India faces the shared threat of cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan-backed groups.
  - Taliban has assured India that Afghan soil will not be used against other countries — a key Indian security demand.
- **Protecting Past Investments and Development Projects:** India has invested over USD 3 billion in Afghan infrastructure, education, and health — including the Zaranj–Delaram highway, Salma (India–Afghanistan Friendship) Dam, and Parliament building.
  - Engagement allows India to safeguard and possibly revive stalled projects.
- **Responding to Regional Power Shifts:** China has expanded its footprint through mining and infrastructure deals; Russia and Iran also maintain active diplomatic ties with the Taliban.
  - India cannot remain isolated when regional rivals are consolidating influence in Kabul.
- **Economic and Connectivity Interests:** Afghanistan is central to India's connectivity with Central Asia, especially via the Chabahar Port in Iran.
  - Long-term engagement could support trade corridors, energy access, and counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects.

India's Engagement Strategy with Taliban

- **Engagement without Recognition:** India announced reopening its embassy in Kabul, upgrading the existing "technical mission" set up in 2022.
  - A chargé d'affaires will be appointed — indicating non-recognition of the Taliban regime until there is international consensus.

- This move ensures India's presence on the ground without appearing aligned with the Russia-China bloc.

- **India's Balancing Act:** India joined the Moscow Format consensus that no foreign military presence should exist in Afghanistan.
  - However, India remains careful not to be perceived as siding fully with Russia or China.
  - Maintaining a measured approach prevents friction with the US and Western allies.
- **Human Rights and Realpolitik:** Unlike past joint statements, India avoided raising human rights issues.
  - It reflects India's realist diplomacy rather than idealist interventionism.
  - This change prioritizes India's national interests, security, and economic growth in a multipolar and often unpredictable world.

Conclusion

- The Taliban's control over Afghan territory since 2021 is a geopolitical reality the world must accept.
- India's engagement ensures a strategic foothold in Afghanistan amid Pakistan–China influence.
- A reopened embassy and renewed cooperation reflects a pragmatic shift in its foreign policy.

Source: TH

ISRAEL–HAMAS CEASEFIRE IMPACT ON GLOBAL TRADE

Context

- **Israel and Hamas** have agreed to a ceasefire and hostage release deal, potentially ending the two-year-long conflict in Gaza.
  - The agreement could **reopen the Red Sea shipping route,** which had been disrupted by **Houthi attacks on vessels, believed to be backed by Iran.**

Freight Rates and Global Trade

- **Since late 2023,** freight rates **surged nearly threefold** due to the need to reroute vessels around the Cape of Good Hope.
- **Shorter Suez Canal routes were blocked**, increasing transit time, shipping costs, and profits for companies.
- **India's trade was particularly affected**, as 90–95% of it depends on foreign carriers, mainly through the Suez Canal.

Impact on India

- **Export Challenges:** Longer routes raised costs and transit time, affecting profit margins, especially for low-margin, labour-intensive goods.

Major Choke Points in International Trade Sea Route

- **Strait of Hormuz:** Located between the **Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman,** the Strait of Hormuz is a crucial passage for oil shipments from the Middle East.
  - A significant portion of the world's oil supply passes through this choke point.
- **Malacca Strait:** Situated between the **Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian island** of Sumatra, the Malacca Strait is one of the busiest waterways globally.
  - It connects the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean, making it a key route for trade between Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia.
- **Panama Canal:** Linking the **Atlantic and Pacific Oceans,** the Panama Canal is crucial for maritime trade between the Americas, Europe, and Asia.
  - It allows ships to bypass the lengthy and treacherous journey around the southern tip of South America.
- **Taiwan Strait:** Separating Taiwan from mainland China, the Taiwan Strait is essential for shipping in the East Asian region. It is a heavily trafficked waterway for goods moving between China, Taiwan, Japan, and other Asian nations.

- **Transport Costs:** Indian exporters faced higher remittances to foreign shipping lines, exceeding $100 billion annually, even before the Red Sea crisis.
- **Strategic Projects at Risk:** India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) could be delayed.
  - IMEC aims to provide alternative routes to Europe via rail, ship-rail networks, and road, reducing reliance on the Suez Canal and offering up to 40% faster transit.
- **Policy Response:** The crisis highlighted India's dependence on foreign shipping and the strategic dominance of China in shipbuilding.
  - Union Cabinet approval (Rs 69,725 crore package) aims to revitalize India's shipbuilding sector.
  - Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS) extended to 2036 with Rs 24,736 crore.
  - National Shipbuilding Mission to oversee initiatives.

Key Expected Outcomes

- The ceasefire **may ease freight rates** and improve global trade, particularly India-Europe exports.
- The long-term impact depends on Houthi compliance and security along the Red Sea route.
- **With freight rates now expected to ease India's exports of low-margin products** such as agricultural goods, textiles, footwear, and marine products could find easier transit to Europe.
  - India relies heavily on the Suez Canal route for its trade with Europe, the US, Africa, and West Asia.
- India is now prioritizing self-reliance in maritime logistics, including shipbuilding, to reduce strategic vulnerability.

Source: IE

MEA INVITES COMMENTS ON DRAFT OVERSEAS MOBILITY BILL, 2025

In News

- The External Affairs Ministry has sought comments and suggestions on the **draft Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2025.**

About

- The proposed **Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2025** envisages comprehensive emigration management, institutes regulatory mechanisms by developing a regime for safe and orderly migration governing overseas employment of Indian nationals.
- It also **establishes a framework** which creates policies and schemes for incentivizing policy actions for protection and promotion of welfare of emigrants.
- It will replace the **existing Emigration Act, 1983.**

Salient Features of the Bill

- **Establishment of Overseas Mobility and Welfare Council:** To be constituted as the apex body for emigration governance, headed by the Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs as ex-officio Chairperson.
  - The council will exercise powers, oversee implementation, and ensure coordination between multiple ministries and stakeholders.
- **Balanced Approach:** Encourages mobility opportunities abroad while safeguarding vulnerable emigrant categories (especially low-skilled workers in GCC and Southeast Asia). It will emphasize ethical recruitment and fair labour practices.
- **Mobility Resource Centres (MRCs):** To be established across India to provide information, resources, counselling, and pre-departure training to potential emigrants.
  - Aim to enhance awareness, skill alignment, and preparedness of workers before going abroad.
- **Data-Driven Policy Management:** Focuses on creating a National Emigrant Database to monitor recruitment trends, grievances, and welfare outcomes.
- **Accreditation and Regulation of Overseas Placement Agencies:** All placement agencies to be accredited by the Competent Authority.
- **Penalties and Enforcement:** Strict penalties for violations for Overseas Placement Agencies contravening orders of the Competent Authority, fines not less than 5 lakh per violation.

Source: PIB

ROADMAP FOR JOB CREATION IN THE AI ECONOMY

In News

- NITI Aayog released a Roadmap for Job Creation in the AI Economy.

About the Roadmap

- The "Roadmap for Job Creation in the AI Economy" was developed by **NITI Aayog's Frontier Tech Hub**, in collaboration with NASSCOM and BCG, with guidance from an Expert Council of industry leaders from IBM, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, LTIMindtree, Teleperformance, and others.
- It sets out **India's path** to becoming a **trusted global AI workforce and innovation partner by 2035.**
- It explores how **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is transforming India's tech services sector and proposes strategies to convert potential job losses into job creation opportunities.

Key Features

- **National AI Talent Mission:** It proposes a nationally coordinated mission to make India the AI workforce capital of the world by 2035 through large-scale skilling, reskilling, and innovation.
- **Core Pillars of the Roadmap**: **AI in Education** – Integrate AI literacy across schools, universities, and vocational training.
  - **National Reskilling Engine** – Equip millions of tech and CX professionals for AI-augmented roles.
  - **Global AI Talent Magnet –** Retain and attract top AI talent, making India a global hub for AI skilling.

Importance

- Roadmap for Job Creation in the AI Economy calls for collaboration among government, industry, and academia, aligning with the ongoing India AI Mission, to build infrastructure and talent ecosystems.
- It aims to safeguard jobs and establish India as a global AI leader by 2035, with strong support from industry and development partners.

Concerns

- AI may cause job displacements in India's $245 billion tech and customer experience (CX) sectors by 2031, especially in routine roles (e.g., QA engineers, L1 support).
- However, up to 4 million new AI-driven jobs could be created in the next five years with timely intervention.

Way Ahead

- AI is already transforming jobs in India's tech and customer experience sectors, putting routine roles at risk of redundancy.
- However, with timely skilling, reskilling, and innovation, India can become a global hub for emerging AI-first roles.
- With strong collaboration between the government, industry, and academia, the country can both protect existing jobs and establish itself as a global leader in AI.

NITI Frontier Tech Hub

- The NITI Frontier Tech Hub is an action tank for Viksit Bharat. In collaboration with over 100 experts from government, industry, and academia, it is shaping a 10-year roadmap across 20+ key sectors to harness frontier technologies for transformative growth and societal development.
- By empowering stakeholders nationwide and driving collective action, the Hub is instilling urgency to act today, laying the foundation for a prosperous, resilient, and technologically advanced India by 2047.

Source :PIB

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION INTENSITY TARGET RULES

In News

- The Centre has notified the **first legally binding Greenhouse Gas Emission** Intensity (GEI) Target Rules, 2025, for **four high-emission sectors**—aluminium, cement, chlor-alkali, and pulp and paper.
  - These Rules form a key part of the **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), 2023**, which operationalises India's domestic carbon market.

About

- These rules fix sector-specific targets for cutting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per unit of product, operationalising India's domestic carbon market under the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), 2023.
- This move supports India's Paris Agreement commitment to reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.

Key Features of GEI Target Rules, 2025

- Applicability to 282 industrial units across aluminium, cement, chlor-alkali, and pulp & paper sectors.

- Targets for emissions intensity (tCO_2e per unit output) for **years 2025–26 and 2026–27.**
- Carbon credits issued for meeting/exceeding targets, tradable within the **domestic carbon market.**
- Penalties and environmental compensation enforced by the **Central Pollution Control Board for non-compliance.**

Linkage with Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), 2023

- CCTS framework enables issuance, verification, and trading of carbon credits earned from emissions reduction.
- Shift from earlier PAT scheme which lacked a market mechanism to incentivize emission trading.
- Market-based approach to incentivize industrial decarbonisation and cost-effective compliance.

Potential Benefits for India

- Drives industrial sectors towards greater energy efficiency and lower carbon footprint.
- Supports India's commitment to reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 compared to 2005 baselines.
- Facilitates technology transfer and promotes innovation in low-carbon technologies.
- Generates economic value through carbon credit trading opportunities.
- Strengthens environmental governance through mandatory compliance and penalties.

Challenges Ahead

- Ensuring robust Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems to maintain credit integrity.
- Managing price volatility and market speculation in carbon credits.
- Equipping industries, especially smaller units, to bear transition costs and technological adaptation.
- Need for capacity building and institutional framing to govern the carbon market effectively.

Comparison with International Carbon Markets

Aspect	GEI Rules & CCTS, India	EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)	China's National ETS
Market Start	2025 (legally binding pilot in select sectors)	2005 (world's first major ETS)	2021 (national launch, phased sector inclusion)
Sectors Covered	Aluminium, cement, chlor-alkali, pulp & paper	Power, industrial sectors, aviation	Power plants initially, planning to expand sectors
Compliance Mechanism	Emission intensity targets per product unit; tradable carbon credits	Cap-and-trade with fixed emission caps per year	Cap-and-trade focused on absolute emissions
Regulatory Authority	Bureau of Energy Efficiency, CPCB	European Commission, national regulators	China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment
Carbon Credit Trading	Domestic market trading credits	Robust EU-wide carbon market with price signals	Emerging market, evolving in sophistication
Integration	Currently domestic market only	Linked with global carbon markets; evolving	Focused on domestic market but exploring expansion

Way Forward

- **Phased Expansion:** Gradually include more sectors beyond the initial four.
- **Capacity Building:** Support industries with knowledge and financial mechanisms to meet targets.
- **Strong MRV System:** Deploy digital monitoring, sensors, and blockchain for credit authenticity.

Source: IE

NATIONAL RED LIST ROADMAP AND VISION 2025–2030

In News

- India has officially launched its **National Red List Roadmap and Vision 2025–2030** at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, marking a transformative step in species assessment and conservation planning.

National Red List Roadmap and Vision 2025–2030

- It envisions publishing Red Data Books for both flora and fauna, providing authoritative documentation of threatened species.
- It is developed by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Botanical Survey of India (BSI), IUCN India, and the Centre for Species Survival.
- India aims to publish National Red Data Books for both flora and fauna by 2030.
- **Key Features**
  - It will assess nearly 11,000 species of plants and animals by 2030, including terrestrial and marine biodiversity
  - It adheres to IUCN Red List protocols and supports India's commitments under the **Convention on Biological Diversity and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.**
  - It includes a centralized digital platform for data collection, monitoring, and public access to conservation status.

Relevance for India

- India, one of the world's 17 megadiverse countries, is home to four of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots, **the Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Burma, and Sundaland**.
- It occupies just **2.4% of the world's land area and it harbours nearly 8% of global flora** and 7.5% of global fauna, with over 28% of plants and 30% of animals being endemic.
- The Red List Roadmap fills this gap by providing baseline data, threat analysis, and conservation priorities essential for policy-making and resource allocation
- It aims to establish a nationally coordinated, science-based framework to assess the extinction risk of India's flora and fauna.

Challenges Ahead

- Many species, especially in remote ecosystems, remain undocumented or poorly studied.
- Effective implementation requires seamless collaboration across central and state departments, research institutions, and local communities which can be difficult.
- Sustained financial and technical support is needed to train personnel, conduct field surveys, and maintain digital infrastructure.
- Infrastructure projects often intersect with ecologically sensitive zones, requiring careful policy integration.

Suggestions and Way Forward

- India's National Red List Roadmap is a strategic effort to protect biodiversity and support global sustainability.
- It focuses on strengthening institutions , involving local communities, integrating data into policy-making, and collaborating with global conservation partners.
- The Red List is expected to become a cornerstone for the country's future environmental and ecological.

Source :DD

NEWS IN SHORT

SAWALKOTE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

In News

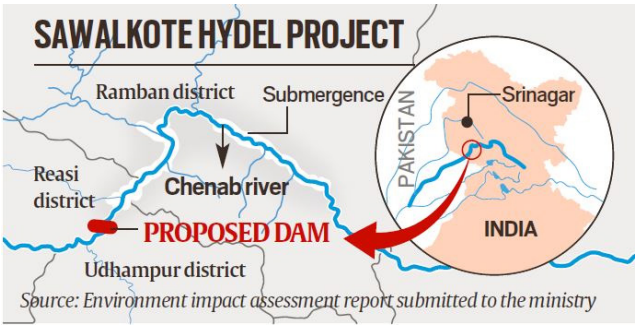
- Recently, an apex committee of the Environment Ministry has accorded a fresh **environmental clearance** to the **Sawalkote hydroelectric project.**

Sawalkote Hydroelectric Project

- **Origin:** First proposed 1984, Sawalkote Hydroelectric Project is a run-of-the-river hydroelectric initiative located on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir.
  - Developed by the **National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC)**, it is poised to become one of India's largest hydroelectric projects in the Indus basin, with a proposed capacity of 1,856 MW.
- **Initial Clearance:** The project received environmental clearance in 2017 under the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation (JKPDC).

- In 2021, JKPDC handed over its execution and control to NHPC Ltd, which will manage it until 2061.

- **Features:** The Sawalkote project will consist of a 192.5-m high Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC) gravity dam with six power generator units of 225 MW capacity and one unit of 56MW capacity in the first stage and two units of 225 MW capacity in the second stage of development.



Source :TH

BHARAT TAXI

In News

- India is going to launch Bharat Taxi, a cooperative-driven national ride-hailing platform, with strategic and technical support from the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD).**

About

- The National e-Governance Division (NeGD), under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), has signed an MoU with **Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited (brand name: Bharat Taxi)** to provide strategic and technical advisory support.
- The initiative is promoted by **leading cooperative and development institutions** such as NCDC, IFFCO, AMUL, KRIBHCO, NAFED, NABARD, NDDB, and NCEL.
- The collaboration will link Bharat Taxi with DigiLocker, UMANG, and API Setu for seamless digital services.

Significance

- **Cooperative Model of Digital Governance:** Embodies the 'Sahakar se Samriddhi' vision by combining cooperative ownership with digital innovation.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat in Mobility:** Reduces dependence on foreign ride-hailing apps by creating an indigenous, interoperable ecosystem.
- **Citizen Empowerment:** Ensures fair pricing, driver dignity, and data privacy, moving toward a public digital infrastructure approach.
- **Synergy with Digital India:** Reinforces India's vision of open, inclusive, and secure digital public goods.

Source: PIB

CCRAS LAUNCHES SPARK 4.0

In News

- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), under the Ministry of Ayush, announced the fourth edition of its flagship **Studentship Program for Ayurveda Research Ken (SPARK) for 2025–26.**

About

- It aims to promote scientific curiosity and research skills among undergraduate Ayurveda students across the country.
- Under SPARK–4.0, 300 Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) students from colleges recognised by the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) would be receiving a studentship of 50,000, disbursed as 25,000 per month over two months.
- The student would get short-term independent research projects and a certificate on completion.

Significance

- Strengthens Ayurveda's research ecosystem.
- Builds a pipeline of trained researchers to integrate traditional medicine into public health.

Source: PIB

CHINA TIGHTENS EXPORT CONTROLS ON RARE-EARTH METALS

Context

- China outlined new **curbs on exports of rare earths and related technologies.**

About

- **Foreign companies** will need approval to export products containing even trace Chinese rare earths.
  - The rules extend to processing technologies, equipment, and intellectual property for the first time.
  - The move could complicate India's efforts to secure inputs for its EV, renewable energy and defence sectors.

- **China's Dominance in Rare Earths:**
  - **Production dominance:** Mines ~60% and processes ~90% of global rare earths.
  - Controls much of the downstream value chain — refining, separation, and permanent magnet manufacturing.

Rare Earth Elements

- **Rare earth elements** are a series of **seventeen substances** that are **present in the earth's crust.**
  - Unlike what the name may indicate, **rare earths occur plentifully in nature,** but the **rarity comes from the ability to isolate them chemically** and make them usable in industrial applications.
- **Demand for rare earth metals** such as neodymium, dysprosium, praseodymium and yttrium is increasing alongside technological advancements.
- **Heavy and light rare earths occur naturally in several countries,** such as India, China, Myanmar, Japan, Australia and North Korea.
  - **China** is the world's largest producer of rare earths followed by the USA.
- **Significance:**
  - They are used in everyday technologies like a cellphone and computer.
  - They are also used in advanced medical technologies like MRIs, laser scalpels and even some cancer drugs.
  - In defense applications, they are used in satellite communications, guidance systems and aircraft structures.
  - They are critical in a number of green technologies, especially those that are going to support net zero carbon emissions goals, like wind turbines and electric vehicles.

Source: DTE

THREE MAJOR PORTS RECOGNISED AS GREEN HYDROGEN HUBS UNDER THE NATIONAL GREEN HYDROGEN MISSION

In News

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has designated Deendayal, V.O. Chidambaranar, and Paradip ports as Green Hydrogen Hubs under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

The National Green Hydrogen Mission

- The Union Cabinet approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission in 2023, with an outlay of 19,744 crore.
- It aims to make India a Global Hub for production, usage and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives, by targeting production of 5 MMT per annum of Green Hydrogen by 2030.
- It will lead to significant decarbonization of the economy, reduced dependence on fossil fuel imports, and enable India to assume technology and market leadership in Green Hydrogen

Latest guidelines

- The guidelines issued in June 2025, allow the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) to recognize **Green Hydrogen Hubs** without direct financial aid, enabling these locations to access incentives under various central and state schemes.
  - These hubs will serve as key centers for hydrogen production and consumption, supporting a sustainable and competitive hydrogen economy.

Impacts

- Designating ports as Green Hydrogen Hubs will drive clean energy innovation and leverage India's strategic maritime positions to promote sustainable logistics.
- Projects will benefit from supportive policies and incentives, expected to boost industrial participation, attract green investments, and foster innovation in clean fuel technologies.
- It aligns with India's broader goal of achieving energy self-reliance and net-zero emissions by 2070.

Source :PIB

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CAREER PROGRAMME

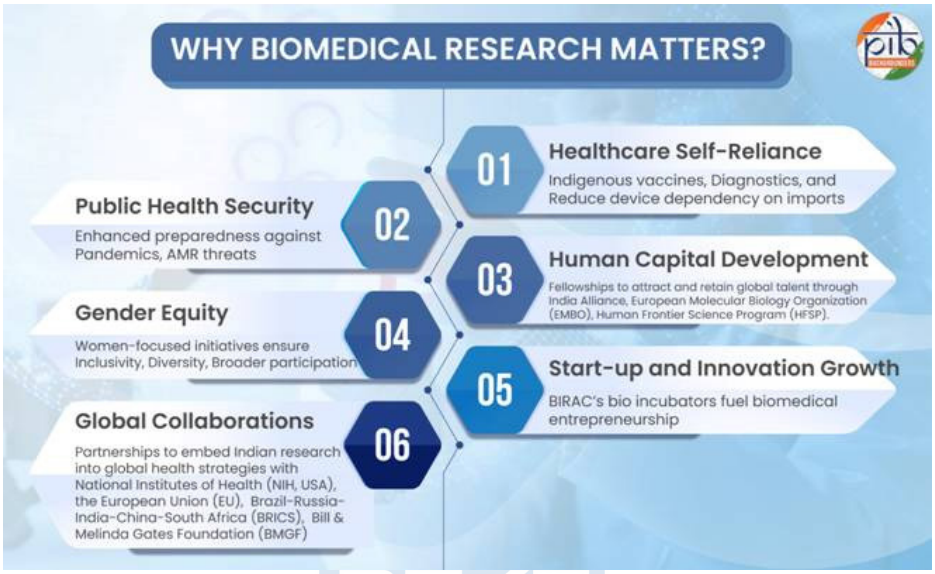
Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved **Phase III of the Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP).**

About

- **The Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)** is a strategic investment in India's health and innovation landscape, supported by a 1,500 crore Indo-UK partnership that aligns global expertise with national priorities.

- **Aim:** To build a world-class research ecosystem in biomedical sciences, clinical, and public health research
- **2025–26 to 2030–31:** Active implementation period during which new research fellowships, collaborative grants, and capacity-building initiatives will be rolled out.
- **2031–32 to 2037–38:** Servicing period for continuing support of fellowships and grants already awarded ensuring long-term continuity and completion of projects.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The initiative targets training 2,000+ researchers, high-impact publications, patentable discoveries, and peer recognition.
  - Aims for 10–15% more support for women scientists, pushing 25–30% projects reaching Technology Readiness Level (TRL-4) and above, and wider Tier-2/3 outreach.



Source: PIB

THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2026

Context

- Oxford University has maintained its global number one ranking for the tenth consecutive year, according to the **Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2026.**

About

- The **22nd edition** of the UK-based THE World University Rankings evaluates 2,191 universities from **115 countries and territories** across 18 performance indicators in **five areas**: teaching, research environment, research quality, international outlook, and industry impact.
- Beyond the **top 100**, universities are assigned "rank bands" instead of specific positions.

University rankings 2026: Highlights

- **India:** Ranked as the **second most-represented country**, behind only the U.S., with a record 128 institutions — up from 107 last year and just 19 in 2016. The **Indian Institute of Science** is placed in the 201–250 rank band, followed by Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences at 351–400.
- **China:** Five universities are in the top 40, up from three last year. **Tsinghua University**, ranked 12th, remains **Asia's top university**.
- **United States:** Seven of the top 10 positions are occupied by the US. However, there is a declining trend overall, with six fewer universities in the top 20 compared to last year and 35 in the top 100, down from 38.

World University Rankings 2026: top 10

2026 rank	2025 rank	Institution	Country/region
1	1	University of Oxford	United Kingdom
2	2	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
=3	4	Princeton University	United States
=3	5	University of Cambridge	United Kingdom
=5	3	Harvard University	United States
=5	6	Stanford University	United States
7	7	California Institute of Technology	United States
8	9	Imperial College London	United Kingdom
9	8	University of California, Berkeley	United States
10	10	Yale University	United States

Source: Officiale THE website

Source: TH

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, 2025

Context

- The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to **María Corina Machado**, the Venezuelan opposition leader, for her efforts in **promoting democracy and driving political change**.

About the Peace Prize

- It is awarded by a committee elected by the **Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget)**. Peace was the **fifth and final prize area** that **Alfred Nobel** mentioned in his will.
- **Since 1901** the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded 105 times, to 139 laureates: 92 men, 19 women and 28 organizations.
- **Mahatma Gandhi**, despite being nominated five times, never won, though his ideals closely align with the UN Charter.
- In **2024**, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to **Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo**, a grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also known as **Hibakusha**.

Do you know?

- The Nobel Peace Prize **cannot be awarded posthumously**. It has been skipped **19 times**, mostly due to wars or absence of a suitable candidate, including during 1914–16, 1918, 1923, 1924, 1928, 1932, 1939–43, 1948, 1955–56, 1966–67, and 1972.

Source: TH