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Time: 45 Min

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Table of Content

News In Short

CLASSICAL LANGUAGES OF INDIA

Context

- As of 2025, a total of **11 Indian languages hold the status of Classical Language.**

About Classical Languages

- The Government of India conferred the 'Classical Language' status to **Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali languages in 2024.**
- **Six Indian languages** —Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia—were earlier accorded the status of classical languages between 2004 to 2024.
- All the Classical Languages are **listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.**
- **Criteria for Classical Language:**
  - High antiquity of its early texts or recorded history, spanning a period of 1,500-2,000 years.
  - A body of ancient literature or texts that is considered heritage by generations of speakers.
  - Knowledge texts, especially prose texts, in addition to poetry, epigraphical and inscriptional evidence.
  - The Classical Language and its literature may be distinct from its current form or show discontinuity with later forms derived from the original.
- **Significance:**
  - Recognising a language as Classical is a **way of honouring and acknowledging its historical importance** and profound impact on India's cultural and intellectual identity.
  - It is significant in preserving and transmitting ancient knowledge, philosophies, and values over thousands of years.
  - This status not only enhances their prestige but also supports efforts to **protect, promote, and further study these languages.**

Steps Undertaken to Promote Classical Languages

- **Central Institute:** The promotion of all Indian languages, including Classical Languages, is done through the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL).
  - It is a subordinate office of the Ministry of Education, was set up in **1969** at Mysore.
  - The Institute promotes Indian languages through several comprehensive schemes.
- **Special Centres:** In addition to this special centres have been set up for the study and promotion of the classical languages, either independently or under CIIL.
- While **four of the centres for classical languages** function under the aegis of the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru, the **centre for Tamil is autonomous.**
- **For the promotion of Sanskrit,** dedicated universities also receive funds directly from the Union Education Ministry.

Eighth Schedule

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the **official languages of the Republic of India.**
- **Part XVII** of the Indian Constitution deals with the official languages in **Articles 343 to 351.**
- The Eighth Schedule includes the recognition of the following **22 languages:**
  - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri are the 22 languages presently in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution.
  - Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution. Subsequently, Sindhi was added in 1967; Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added in 1992; and Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

Source: PIB

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND RIGHT TO PRIVACY INTERLINKED: SUPREME COURT

Context

- The Supreme Court of India has recently held that the freedom of religion under Article 25 and the right to privacy under Article 21 are deeply interlinked.

Supreme Court ruling

- The judgment arose in response to multiple petitions challenging provisions of the **Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act**, highlighting the constitutional

balance between individual autonomy and state control.

- It stated that privacy is a "**condition precedent"** for exercising freedom of religion, as personal faith choices are rooted in internal belief and conscience.
- The court observed that **state interference in personal belief systems**, such as mandatory disclosure of conversion or prior state approval, can violate both privacy and religious freedom.

Significance of the judgement

- The judgment calls for a balance between **protecting vulnerable individuals from coercion** and respecting voluntary faith changes.
  - It promotes tolerance by affirming that **belief is personal and beyond state surveillance.**
- It represents continuity in the Supreme Court's shift toward expanding the **"zone of personal liberty"** under **Article 21.**
- The Court's reasoning aligns with **Shafin Jahan v. Asokan K.M. (2018)**, where the Supreme Court upheld an individual's autonomy in matters of faith and marriage, affirming that such choices are central to personal liberty.

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 25(1):** Guarantees all persons the freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice, and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality, and health.
- **Article 25(2)(b):** Permits the State to regulate or restrict religious conversions in the interest of public order, morality, or health, but does not allow interference with voluntary personal faith changes.
- **Article 21:** Guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which has been judicially expanded to include privacy, encompassing the internal freedom of thought, belief, and conscience in Justice **K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India, 2017.**
- **Article 19(1)(a):** Ensures the freedom of speech and expression, including the right to express or withhold one's religious identity.

Concluding remarks

- The ruling redefines the scope of religious liberty by recognising that faith and privacy are two sides of the same constitutional coin.
- It strengthens the principle that individual autonomy must prevail over state control in matters of conscience.
- It calls for laws and policies that protect citizens from coercion while respecting personal choices rooted in belief and dignity.

Source: TOI

GOOGLE AI MODEL HELPS UNMASK CANCER CELLS TO THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

In News

- Google DeepMind announced that its **AI model C2S-Scale** generated a new hypothesis about **cancer cell behavior that was later confirmed in lab experiments.**

C2S-Scale

- It is a **family of large language models (LLMs)** built upon **Google's Gemma-2 architecture.**
- It is designed to interpret biological data by converting single-cell RNA sequencing into simplified "cell sentences".
- It is trained on over 50 million cells and the 27-billion-parameter model learns gene expression patterns across tissues and diseases, enabling it to reason about cellular behavior in natural language.

Latest Developments

- C2S-Scale generated a novel hypothesis that the **drug silmitasertib** could make certain **cancer** cells more visible to the immune system when combined with low levels of interferon.
- Lab experiments confirmed this prediction in neuroendocrine **cancer** cells, showing a marked increase in antigen presentation under the specified conditions.

Role of AI and LLMs in Healthcare

- **Transformative Technology:** AI, especially Large Language Models (LLMs), is revolutionising healthcare by analysing vast biomedical and clinical datasets for faster diagnosis and innovation.
- **Decoding Biology:** Models like C2S-Scale interpret cellular and genetic signals, helping

scientists understand disease mechanisms and cellular behaviour.

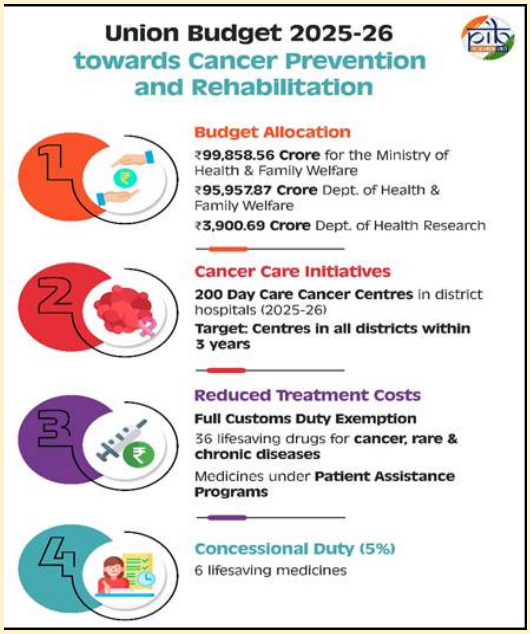
- **Digital Scientific Partner:** LLMs act as virtual collaborators, generating testable hypotheses, validating data, and accelerating biomedical research.
- **Drug Discovery:** They simulate drug–cell interactions, identify new therapeutic targets, and reduce the time and cost of R&D cycles.
- **Precision Medicine:** Enable personalised treatment based on individual genetic and molecular profiles, improving efficacy and reducing side effects.
- **Patient Care & Engagement:** AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants offer 24×7 support, post-treatment guidance, and lifestyle counselling.
- **Ethical Oversight:** Ensuring data privacy, transparency, and accountability remains essential to integrate AI responsibly in healthcare.

About Cancer

- **Overview:** It refers to a group of diseases characterized by the rapid growth of abnormal cells that can invade nearby tissues and **spread to other organs (metastasis)**, which is the leading cause of **cancer-related deaths**.
- **Causes:** It develops through a multi-stage process influenced by **genetic factors and external agents**, including physical (e.g., radiation), chemical (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, asbestos), and biological carcinogens (e.g., viruses and bacteria).
  - Age increases cancer risk due to accumulated exposures and declining cellular repair mechanisms.
- **Prevention & Treatment:** Early detection and proper treatment significantly improve outcomes. Prevention measures include avoiding tobacco and alcohol, maintaining a healthy diet and weight, regular exercise, vaccinations, sun protection, safe radiation use, and minimizing exposure to pollutants and carcinogens.

Related Steps in India

- The **National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP)** under ICMR has been tracking cancer incidence, burden, and trends since 1982, playing a vital role in gathering and analyzing data, enabling evidence-based policy decisions.
- **Union Budget 2025-26: Prioritizing Cancer Care.**



- **National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) -** The NPCDCS is a flagship initiative under the National Health Mission (NHM) focused on controlling non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cancer.
- **Launched in 2018**, **Ayushman Bharat** provides universal health coverage for vulnerable populations, including cancer care.
  - It covers chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and surgical oncology, ensuring treatment within 30 days.
- **In April 2024,** India achieved a historic milestone in cancer care with the launch of **NexCAR19**, the **nation's first indigenously developed CAR-T cell therapy,** created through a groundbreaking collaboration between IIT Bombay, Tata Memorial Centre, and ImmunoACT.
- **In Sep 2024**, India, in partnership with the US, Australia, and Japan, launched the **Quad Cancer Moonshot** to eliminate cervical cancer across the Indo-Pacific region.

Source: IE

INDIA-JAPAN TIES & QUAD

Context

- The newly elected Prime Minister of Japan has pledged to increase defence spending and

deepen strategic ties with India and fellow members of the QUAD alliance — the United States, Australia, and India.

Japan's Vision

- Sanae Takaichi, **Japan's first woman Prime Minister**, is known for her assertive stance on **national security**.
- Her administration has signaled a departure from **Japan's traditionally pacifist defence policy *(Article 9),*** rooted in its post-WWII Constitution. She has vowed to:
  - Raise defence expenditure beyond the current 2% of GDP;
  - Modernize Japan's Self-Defense Forces;
  - Revisit constitutional clauses that restrict military engagement;

Commitment to Security Alliances

- She emphasized Japan's participation in frameworks such as the **QUAD (Japan, India, the US, and Australia)**, and partnerships with the **US, South Korea, the Philippines, and ASEAN nations**.
- She underscored that the '**free, open, and stable international order'** is under pressure from 'historical shifts in the balance of power' and 'intensifying geopolitical competition', citing **Russia, China, and North Korea** as serious security concerns.

About the India–Japan Ties

- **Historical Overview:** India and Japan share a long-standing civilizational bond, underpinned by **Buddhist cultural linkages** and **post–World War II diplomatic outreach.**
  - Modern strategic cooperation began with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's 2007 visit and his **'Confluence of the Two Seas' speech** before the Indian Parliament—an intellectual precursor to the **QUAD framework.**
- **Strategic Partnership**: Bilateral relations were elevated to a *'Special Strategic and Global Partnership'* in 2014 during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Japan.
  - The partnership encompasses defense, technology, infrastructure, and maritime security. It includes:
    - **2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** (Foreign and Defence Ministers);
    - **Annual Summit Meetings;**
    - **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA);**
    - Collaboration in high-speed rail (Mumbai–Ahmedabad), clean energy, and critical technologies (semiconductors, AI, 5G).
  - Japan expressed its intent to deepen the **Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership**, and both nations set to enhance collaboration on **defence, technology, and workforce development**, with the ongoing **Action Plan** to facilitate **500,000 workforce exchanges** — including **50,000 skilled professionals from India** — over the next five years.
- **Defense & Security Cooperation:** India and Japan have intensified joint military drills such as **Dharma Guardian**, ***Japan–India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX),*** and **Malabar** — which includes the US and Australia **under the QUAD banner.**
  - The **Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)** signed in 2020 further enables reciprocal logistics support between the two militaries, boosting interoperability across the Indo-Pacific.
- **Economic & Technological Pillars:** Japan remains **India's fifth-largest investor**, with commitments exceeding $40 billion under the investment promotion partnership of 2014. Collaboration extends to:
  - **Smart cities** and industrial corridors (Delhi–Mumbai, Chennai–Bengaluru);
  - **Digital partnership** for cybersecurity and 5G innovation;
  - **Supply chain resilience initiatives (SCRI)** with Australia, ensuring diversification away from China.
- **Maritime & Regional Significance:** Both India and Japan view the Indo-Pacific as a continuum linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
  - Japan's **Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)** vision aligns with India's **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)** doctrine. Their joint leadership in QUAD underscores commitment to:
    - Upholding UNCLOS-based maritime order;
    - Ensuring freedom of navigation;
    - Strengthening regional capacity-building (in ASEAN, Pacific Islands, and Africa).

Related Concerns and Challenges

- **Strategic Asymmetry:** Japan is a close US ally, while India maintains strategic autonomy.
  - It can lead to differing approaches on China, regional security, and Quad priorities.
- **Economic Imbalances:** Despite strong diplomatic ties, bilateral trade remains modest.
  - Japan's investments in India are significant, but India's exports to Japan lag behind.
- **Infrastructure Bottlenecks:** Flagship projects like the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train face delays due to land acquisition and regulatory hurdles.
  - These delays can dampen investor confidence and slow momentum.
- **Cultural and Business Gaps:** Language barriers, work culture differences, and regulatory complexity in India can deter Japanese businesses.
  - The Japan-India Startup Hub aims to bridge these gaps, but challenges persist.
- **Regional Security Concerns:** Both nations face pressure from an assertive China, but their threat perceptions and responses vary.
  - Coordination within the Quad must balance national interests with collective goals.
- **Technology and Innovation Divide:** Japan leads in robotics and advanced manufacturing, while India is strong in IT and digital services.
  - Aligning these strengths for joint innovation requires better policy coordination and R&D collaboration.

Way Forward: India–Japan Joint Vision for the Next Decade

- **Resilient Supply Chains and Economic Security:** Strengthening trusted supply chains for critical minerals, semiconductors, and green technologies.
  - Promotion of Japanese investment in India's manufacturing and digital infrastructure.
  - Cooperation under the ***Asia Resilient Supply Chain Initiative (ARSCI).***
- **Connectivity and Infrastructure Partnership:** Expansion of *Japan's ODA and private investment* in India's infrastructure — high-speed rail, industrial corridors, and smart cities.
  - Collaboration in ***third-country infrastructure projects*** in South Asia, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific, emphasizing transparency and sustainability.
- **Defense and Security Cooperation:** Deeper **maritime domain awareness (MDA)** collaboration, joint exercises, and defense technology co-development.
  - Focus on defense production partnerships aligned with India's 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives.
- **Digital Partnership and Critical Technologies:** Collaboration in 5G/6G, AI, quantum computing, and cybersecurity.
  - Establishment of **India–Japan Digital Partnership 2.0.**
  - Joint research on trusted telecommunications networks and digital governance.
- **Energy Transition and Climate Action:** Cooperation in *green hydrogen, ammonia, offshore wind, and nuclear energy safety*.
  - Investment in energy efficiency, electric mobility, and carbon capture initiatives.
  - Reinforcement of the ***Japan–India Clean Energy Partnership (CEP).***
- **People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges:** New initiatives to promote educational, tourism, and youth exchanges.
  - Skill development programs through ***Japan–India Institutes for Manufacturing (JIM)*** and ***Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC)*** in Indian universities.
- **Partnership for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future:** Joint humanitarian assistance, disaster relief (HADR), and global health initiatives.
  - Strengthened collaboration on sustainable development in the Global South.
  - Shared vision for human-centric technology and resilient democracies.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

RANI CHENNAMMA

Context

- The **Kittur Rani Chennamma Utsav,** a three-day festival to honour the bravery of **Rani Chennamma,** began in Kittur, **Karnataka.**

About

- She was among the **earliest Indian rulers** to rebel against British rule — decades before the 1857 Revolt.

- Today, she is remembered as both a **symbol of Karnataka's pride and an early feminist icon.**

Revolt

- To prevent **British annexation**, Chennamma adopted a relative's son as heir.
- The British East India Company rejected this adoption — an **early example of what later became the Doctrine of Lapse** (formalised by Dalhousie).
- Faced with losing sovereignty, she chose to resist rather than submit to British control.
- Chennamma was imprisoned and died in captivity in 1829.

Legacy

- **Social:** A feminist and nationalist icon inspiring later generations.
  - She is one of the **first female freedom fighters against British rule.**
- **Historical:** One of the earliest anti-colonial resistances in South India.
- **Cultural:** Embodied in Karnataka's folklore and collective memory.

Source: IE

EAST TIMOR 11TH MEMBER OF ASEAN

Context

- The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) welcomed **East Timor as its newest member.**

About

- **East Timor,** also known as **Timor-Leste,** had long attempted to join ASEAN, given the organisation's significance in maintaining economic, political and security coordination in the region.
- It also marked **ASEAN's first expansion in years,** after **Cambodia last joined it in 1999.**

East Timor

- East Timor is located in the **Pacific Ocean to the north of Australia.**
- It constitutes the **eastern side of a larger island,** while most of the western side is under **Indonesian control.**
- East Timor was a Portuguese colony for over four centuries before it gained independence in **1975**, but was invaded by Indonesia just nine days later.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- It was established in **1967 in Bangkok, Thailand.**
- **It was founded by five countries:** Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.
- **Aim:** To promote regional cooperation and stability amid Cold War tensions.
- **Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia.
- **Current Member States:** ASEAN currently consists of 11 member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and East Timor.
- **ASEAN maintains dialogue partnerships** with multiple countries and organizations, including India, China, the USA, Japan, Australia, the EU, and others.

Source: IE

COFFEE

In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the growing **international popularity of Indian coffee.**

About Coffee

- India is the **seventh-largest coffee producer globally,** contributing around 3% of global output.
- **Nearly 70% of India's coffee is exported**, earning approximately USD 1.80 billion during 2024–25, making it an important foreign exchange earner in India's agri-export basket.
- **Major export destinations are** Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Russia.
- **Major Coffee-Producing States in India are** Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu & Others (Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, NE States).

- Coorg, Chikmagalur, Wayanad, Araku Valley are known for **GI-tagged varieties.**
- **Types of Coffee** are Arabica (Coffea arabica) & Robusta (Coffea canephora).

Koraput Model (Odisha)

- Once degraded forest land is being revived through coffee cultivation. The coffee is now branded as "Specialty Tribal Coffee," similar to Araku coffee.

Institutional Framework

- **Coffee Board of India (1942):** Under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
  - **Functions:** Promotion of coffee exports, research and development, market intelligence etc.
  - **Headquarters:** Bengaluru.
- **Central Coffee Research Institute (CCRI):** Established in 1925 in Chikmagalur, Karnataka.

Source: IE

MAHA MEDTECH MISSION

In News

- Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Gates Foundation, has launched the **Mission for Advancement in High-Impact Areas (MAHA)-Medical Technology (महा MedTech).**

About Maha MedTech Mission

- It will provide funding support to a wide range of entities including Academic and R&D institutions, Hospitals, Startups, MSMEs, MedTech industry and collaborations between entities.
- It will support projects that bring impactful MedTech solutions to market.
- It aims to accelerate innovation in **India's medical technology sector,** reduce reliance on high-cost imports, and promote equitable access to affordable and high-quality medical technologies.

India's MedTech sector

- India's MedTech sector is a fast-growing "sunrise" industry poised to expand from roughly USD 11–14 billion today toward USD 30–50 billion by 2030.
- India is the 4th largest medical devices market in Asia, after Japan, China, and South Korea.
- Government Initiatives & Policies opted recently are PLI Scheme for Medical Devices (2020), PRIP Scheme (2023), & National Medical Device Policy (2023) & Medical Device Parks etc.

Source: PIB

EXTREMUM-SEEKING (ES) FEEDBACK SYSTEM

Context

- The ability of insects and hummingbirds to hover—remaining nearly motionless in air—has long challenged scientists, as it seemed unstable and computationally intensive according to classical aerodynamics.
  - A new study suggests that hovering is instead governed by an **extremum-seeking (ES) feedback system**.

Extremum-Seeking Feedback System

- An ES system is a **real-time feedback process** that allows the flyer (insect or bird) to make incremental adjustments, observe their outcomes, and gradually maintain stability by learning through trial and error, all without requiring knowledge of detailed aerodynamic equations or complex neural computation.
- Simulations using **ES feedback successfully replicated hovering in species** like hawkmoths, craneflies, bumblebees, hoverflies, and hummingbirds.
- Each model maintained altitude and stability purely with simple feedback, not with detailed models of flight dynamics or complex computation.

Significance

- **For Biology:** Demonstrates that hovering can arise from simple feedback mechanisms, not advanced neural computation.
  - Enhances understanding of how insects manage real-time stability with minimal brain power.
- **For Engineering:** Opens scope for bio-inspired drone design with lightweight, efficient, and stable

hovering using simple feedback loops rather than complex control algorithms.

Source: TH

UTTARAKHAND PLANS 'GREEN CESS' ON OUTSIDE VEHICLES

Context

- Uttarakhand has announced the introduction of a '**Green Cess'** on vehicles entering the state from other parts of India.

Key Features

- **Applicability:** The cess will be levied on all non-Uttarakhand vehicles entering the state.
- **Exemptions:** Electric, hydrogen, solar, and battery-operated vehicles will be exempted.
- **The funds collected will be utilized for;**
  - Air pollution control measures.
  - Green infrastructure and smart traffic management.
  - Expansion of air quality monitoring systems.
  - Road dust control and tree plantation campaigns.
  - Development of green zones.
- It aligns with **India's National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**, which targets a **40%** reduction in particulate matter (**PM10 and PM2.5**) concentrations by **2026** in non-attainment cities.

What is Cess?

- A cess is a **special-purpose levy** imposed over and above the existing taxes (such as income tax, GST, or excise duty).
- It is collected to raise funds for a particular objective or sector, such as **education, health, environment, or infrastructure.**
- Unlike general taxes, which go into the **Consolidated Fund of India or State**, the proceeds from a cess are usually earmarked for a designated fund to be used only for that purpose.

Source: IE

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY (NBA)

In News

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has disbursed ₹18.3 lakh to **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** in Uttar Pradesh and Sikkim as part of the **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002.**
  - **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) i**s a mechanism for equitable sharing of profits derived from biological resources.

About National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a **statutory and autonomous body** established under the **Biological Diversity Act of 2002.**
- It operates under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and is headquartered in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu.**
- **Key Functions include** advising the Central Government on conservation, sustainable use, and equitable sharing of benefits from biological resources, regulating access to Indian biological resources by foreign companies and individuals, and overseeing permission for commercial utilization.

Organizational Framework

- The Act provides for a **three-tier system:**
  - National Level: National Biodiversity Authority (NBA).
  - State Level: State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs).
  - Local Level: Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

Source: DD News

CONSERVATION CONCERNS OVER THE WESTERN GHATS

Context

- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN),** in its recent **World Heritage Outlook, 2025 report,** classified the Western Ghats as being of **"significant concern"** due to escalating threats.

Key Findings of the Report

- Nearly **40%** of global sites face conservation concerns.
- Climate change remains the most prevalent threat, followed by **tourism, invasive species, and infrastructure development.**
- The share of sites with a positive conservation outlook has declined, from **63%** (2014–2020) to **57%** (2025).
- Status of India's World Heritage sites:
  - **Significant Concern:** Western Ghats, Manas National Park, and Sundarbans National Park.

- **Good with Some Concerns:** Kaziranga, Keoladeo, Nanda Devi, and Great Himalayan National Park.
- **Good:** Khangchendzonga National Park.

Western Ghat

- The Western Ghats are a **1,600-km** long mountain chain along the west coast of India running from the river Tapi in the north to Kanyakumari in the south.
- It covers **six states** — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. About 60 percent of the mountain range is in Karnataka.
- **Significance:**These Ghats are home to high mountain forests, which moderate the tropical climate of the region.
  - They are home to 325 globally threatened flora, fauna, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish species.
- Western Ghats were accorded the **World Heritage Status by UNESCO** in **2012.**

Source: TH

YUGE YUGEEN BHARAT NATIONAL MUSEUM

In News

- The first gallery of the Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum is expected to open in a year, with the full concept for the world's largest museum ready within 36 months.

Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum

- It is part of the **Central Vista Redevelopment Project.**
- It will be developed through Adaptive Reuse, in collaboration with France, renowned for its expertise in such projects, exemplified by the Louvre, Grand Palais, and Hôtel de la Marine.
- It includes the transformation of **North and South Blocks** of symmetrical buildings into museum spaces for the creation of a new National Museum elucidating the thousands-year-old civilizational and cultural heritage.
- It is aimed at showcasing India's cultural heritage – a celebration of timeless & eternal India to explore our proud past, illuminate the present & imagine the bright future.

Source: IE

RAMPUR AND MUDHOL HOUND DOG BREEDS TO BE INDUCTED BY BSF

In News

- The Border Security Force (BSF) has begun training 150 indigenous Rampur and Mudhol Hound dogs for border security, counterinsurgency, and special operations.

Mudhol Hounds

- **History**: Mudhol Hounds are believed to have been bred **first by Raja Malojirao Ghorpade** of the erstwhile kingdom of Mudhol (in present-day Bagalkot) after he saw the qualities of the dogs that tribal communities of his territory kept.
  - The Raja is said to have presented a couple of these dogs to King George V on a visit to England, after which the breed got the name of Mudhol Hound.
- **Characteristics**: Mudhol Hounds, known for their speed, stamina, sharp vision, and strong guarding instincts, were sent by the Indian Army to the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) training centre in Meerut in 2016—the first time an indigenous breed was trained there.

The Rampur Hound

- **History**: Rampur Hounds, bred 300 years ago in Uttar Pradesh by the Nawab of Rampur from Afghan and English Greyhounds, were historically used for hunting and guarding.
  - The breed declined after India's Independence, making purebreds rare today, though preservation efforts are ongoing.
- **Characteristics:** Rampur Hounds are fast, athletic sighthounds built for speed and endurance.
  - They are loyal and obedient to their families, intelligent in hunting and running tasks, and reserved with strangers. Naturally timid, they can be protective and alert, making them effective guard dogs.

Dogs used by militaries across the globe

- **Military dogs** are selected for roles such as explosive detection, patrol and apprehension, search and rescue, and tracking.
  - Suitability depends on traits such as intelligence, trainability, physical agility, endurance, and strong scenting abilities.
- The US military, for example, primarily breeds and trains Belgian Malinois.

Source :IE

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