

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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Table of Content

Why Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Is Crucial for India's Courts?

AI Integration in Indian Classroom

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY): Nurturing Organic Farming in India

RBI Grants SRO Status to Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC)

Philippines Pioneers Coral Larvae Cryobank

NEWS IN SHORT

150th anniversary of Vande Matram

Schedule M Norms

Leprosy in India

Namchik Namphuk Coal Block

Falling Camel Counts

Phosphine

Exercise KONKAN-25

WHY ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) IS CRUCIAL FOR INDIA'S COURTS?

Context

- India's judicial system is grappling with an unprecedented backlog underscoring the urgent need for alternative mechanisms to ensure timely delivery of justice.

About Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

- It refers to a set of processes that allow parties to resolve disputes outside the formal court system. These include:
 - Arbitration:** A binding process where a neutral arbitrator delivers a decision.
 - Conciliation:** A non-binding process where a conciliator helps parties reach a settlement.
 - Mediation:** A voluntary, confidential process facilitated by a neutral mediator.
 - Judicial Settlement / Lok Adalat:** Court-referred settlements, often used for public utility disputes.

Why Is ADR Essential?

- Pendency Challenge in Indian Courts:** According to the **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)**, India currently faces an enormous backlog of **4,57,96,239 pending cases**:
 - Supreme Court:** 81,768 cases;
 - High Courts:** ~62.9 lakh cases.
- Systemic Inefficiencies and State-Level Disparities:** The **India Justice Report 2025** reveals critical gaps:
 - Vacancy rates:** 33% in High Courts and 21% in District Courts.
 - Judicial workload:** Judges in **Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Kerala** handle over **4,000 cases each**.
 - Case pendency exceeding 10 years** across many jurisdictions.
- Cost-Effective and Time-Saving:** ADR methods like arbitration, mediation, and conciliation offer quicker resolutions.
 - It promotes ease of doing business and contract enforcement, especially critical in commercial disputes.
- Social Inclusion and Accessibility:** ADR is less adversarial and more participatory.
 - Mediation allows parties to resolve disputes in a neutral, confidential setting, preserving relationships and reducing hostility.

Constitutional and Legal Basis of ADR

- Article 39A:** It mandates the State to ensure equal justice and free legal aid.
- Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure (1908):** ADR processes such as **arbitration, conciliation, mediation, and judicial settlement (Lok Adalat)** derive statutory recognition from **Section 89 CPC**.
- The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (Amended in 2021):** It provides the legal framework for arbitration and conciliation in India.
 - It establishes the **Indian Arbitration Council** to regulate procedures.
 - Fixes a **maximum resolution period of 180 days**, ensuring time-bound justice.
 - Permits **exit from mediation** after two sessions if parties are dissatisfied.
 - Promotes **pre-litigation mediation** for civil and commercial disputes to ease judicial backlog.
- Mediation Act, 2023:** It mandates pre-litigation mediation for civil and commercial disputes.
 - Lok Adalats and Gram Nyayalayas** provide community-level dispute resolution, rooted in India's traditional ethos.

Functioning of Lok Adalats

- Lok Adalats** function under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, embodying **Article 39A's spirit**. They exist in several forms:
 - Permanent Lok Adalat** (Section 22-B);
 - National Lok Adalat;**
 - e-Lok Adalat.**

Characteristics and Significance

- Their decisions are **final and binding**, with **no provision for appeal**, since disputes are resolved **pre-litigation**.
 - However, dissatisfied parties may still **file a fresh suit**, ensuring accountability.
- Lok Adalats offer a **people-centric** mechanism for swift, consensual resolution of disputes and serve as a **bridge between formal law and social harmony**.
- The **first Lok Adalat** was held in **Gujarat in 1999**.

Global Alignment and Commercial Relevance

- ADR aligns with international norms like the **UNCITRAL Model Law**.

- Foreign investors prefer ADR for its neutrality and efficiency, making it crucial for India's global economic engagement.

Towards a More Accessible and Accountable Justice System

- Strengthening ADR mechanisms aligns with India's constitutional vision of **speedy and inclusive justice**. With rising case pendency and resource constraints, ADR offers a **collaborative, humane, and efficient** pathway to justice.
 - ♦ By reinforcing **legal awareness, institutional capacity, and community engagement**, India can transform ADR into a pillar of **21st-century justice delivery**, resonating with its **civilisational philosophy of consensus and fairness**.
- The recent reiteration of the **doctrine of Panch Parmeshwar** (a traditional principle symbolising collective consensus in dispute resolution) by the Union Minister of Law and Justice and underlining the importance of **global cooperation** are vital for strengthening **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)** mechanisms.

[Source: TH](#)

AI INTEGRATION IN INDIAN CLASSROOM

Context

- **India AI's mission** envisages the opening of the AI Centres for Excellence (CoE) in education.

IndiaAI Mission

- A key focus of this mission is the development of a **high-end common computing facility** equipped with **18,693 Graphics Processing Units (GPUs)**, making it one of the most extensive AI compute infrastructures globally.
- This capacity is **nearly nine times** that of the open-source AI model DeepSeek and about two-thirds of what ChatGPT operates on.

India's AI Integration in Education

- **Increase in Number of Schools having Computer Access:** One of the most notable improvements is the increase in the number of schools with computer access, rising from 57.2% in 2023–24 to 64.7% this year.
- **Increase in Number of Schools having Internet Access:** The percentage of schools with internet connectivity increased from 53.9% in the previous year to 63.5% in 2024–25.

- **Teacher training & digital literacy:** Fewer than 50% of secondary/higher secondary teachers are trained in computer use.
- **Student access, gender, and digital divides:** Male students tend to have higher digital literacy than female peers; rural and disadvantaged students have lower access.

AI in Curriculum & Policy

- **National Strategy for AI (2018):** Education was identified as a core sector in India's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence. **The strategy suggests:**
 - ♦ Curriculum reforms to integrate AI and digital skill education.
 - ♦ Adaptive learning tools, intelligent tutoring systems, and predictive analytics (for student dropout risk, etc.).
 - ♦ Digitization of records (teacher performance, student data) as prerequisites.
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** NEP 2020 sees AI as a transformative force and calls for adaptation of the education ecosystem to leverage it. **It envisions:**
 - ♦ AI-based software for holistic progress tracking using learning data and interactive questionnaires.
 - ♦ Use of adaptive assessment systems and AI-driven feedback to personalize learning and support diverse learners.
- **AI Subject / Curriculum in Schools:** CBSE has introduced Artificial Intelligence as an optional subject from Class VIII (12-hour module), and as a skill subject in Classes IX–XII.
 - ♦ CBSE released an AI Curriculum Handbook and AI Integration Manual to support teachers.
 - ♦ **Topics include three domains:** data, computer vision, and natural language processing, in an age-appropriate manner.
- **India has several national building blocks intended to reduce the readiness gap:**
 - ♦ DIKSHA (a national digital infrastructure for learning resources), PM e-VIDYA (multimode access to digital education), the National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) blueprint, and Samagra Shiksha (which finances ICT components in schools and teacher training).
 - ♦ These platforms and schemes provide a backbone for scaling digital content and teacher development.

Significance of AI adoption in Schools

- **Personalized / adaptive learning:** AI can dynamically adjust difficulty, pace, content type based on individual student performance, providing remedial or extension support.
- **Multilingual & language support:** AI can help students access content in multiple languages, support translation, and assist learners in linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- **Support for learners with disabilities:** AI can enable assistive technologies (text-to-speech, alternate input modalities, personalized interfaces) to enhance accessibility.
- **Automating administrative tasks:** Grading, report generation, lesson planning, attendance, etc., can be partially automated to free up teacher time for higher value tasks.
- **Enhanced assessment design & feedback:** AI can help design assessments that go beyond rote recall and standardize grading to some extent.
- **Predictive analytics for at-risk students:** By analyzing attendance, performance, etc., AI systems can flag students likely to drop out or underperform and prompt interventions.

Challenges/Concerns

- **Bias, fairness & trust:** If models are trained on non-diverse or skewed data, they may perpetuate or amplify biases (gender, socio-economic, language).
- **Data privacy & security:** Schools hold sensitive student and teacher data. Ensuring secure storage, limiting usage, obtaining consent, and preventing misuse is complex.
- **AI misinformation:** Generative models may produce incorrect or misleading content. In education, such hallucinations can mislead students.
- **Lack of localized datasets and language support:** Many AI tools are built in English or dominant languages; regionally relevant datasets or models in Indian languages are scarce.
- **Digital divide & equity:** Students in remote, poor, or underprivileged areas may lack devices, connectivity, or support, leading to exclusion.
- **Preservation of foundational thinking skills:** Overreliance on AI tools can weaken students' capacity for independent thinking, reasoning, and self-regulated learning.

Suggestions

- **Transparency & explainability:** Systems should disclose how they arrive at recommendations or judgments, in user-understandable ways.
- **Privacy & consent:** Child data must be collected with verifiable parental consent, stored securely, used only for intended purposes, and retention limited (In line with India's DPDP Act 2023).
- **Expand internet connectivity and digital access,** especially in rural and government schools, to close the infrastructure gap.
- **Invest in school-level computing** hardware, maintenance, and IT support systems (e.g., regional support centers).
- **Scale up teacher training and professional development** focusing not just on technical skills but pedagogy, AI literacy, ethics, and implementation support.
- **Establish clear policy and regulatory guardrails,** including guidelines for data use, audit, liability, redress, and transparency.

Source: TH

PARAMPARAGAT KRISHI VIKAS YOJANA (PKVY): NURTURING ORGANIC FARMING IN INDIA

Context

- The Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), launched in 2015 under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, has emerged as a flagship initiative to promote organic farming in India.

What is Organic farming?

- Organic farming is a sustainable agriculture system that excludes synthetic inputs like chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- It relies on natural resources like crop residues, farmyard manure, and compost to maintain soil health and manage pests and diseases.

Organic farming in India

- **India ranks at 4th place** in terms of certified area globally as per the report published by International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Statistics 2022.
- **Madhya Pradesh** has the largest area under organic certification followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka.

- ♦ **Sikkim** is India's first fully organic state, with implementing organic practices on around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land.
- **India ranks first** globally in terms of number of farmers practicing organic farming.
- **The exports of India's organic products** stood at \$708 million in 2022-23 and considering the global market size of around \$138 billion, there is a tremendous scope to increase the organic exports in the near future.

Advantages of Organic farming

- **Healthier Food Products:** Organic farming results in food products that are free from harmful chemical residues with higher levels of essential nutrients.
- **Enhanced Soil Health:** Organic farming methods focus on building and maintaining soil health by increasing organic matter content, microbial activity, and nutrient cycling.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Organic farming provides economic benefits to farmers through premium prices for organic products, access to niche markets, and reduced input costs over the long term.
- **Climate Change Mitigation:** Organic farming practices such as composting and organic soil management contribute to carbon sequestration in the soil, helping to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Organic farming practices support biodiversity by creating habitats for beneficial insects, birds, and other wildlife.

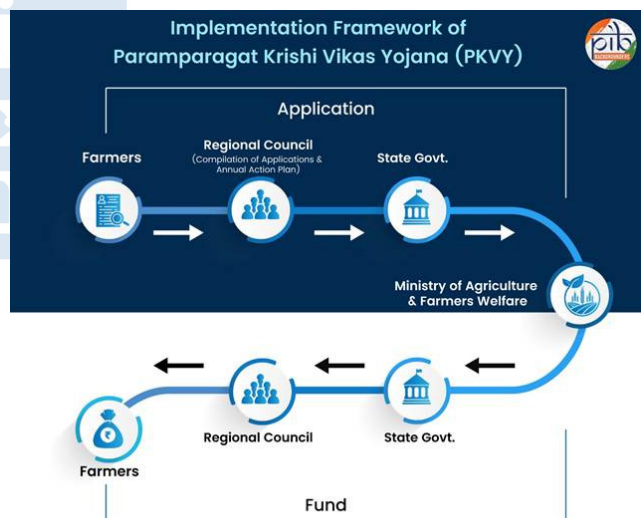
Organic certifications systems in India

- **National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP):** It is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for development of the export market.
 - ♦ It is a **third party certification programme** where the production and handling of activities at all stages such as production, processing, trading and export requirements for organic products is covered.
- **Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS-India):** Operated under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, this is a farmer-centric, community-based certification.
 - ♦ **Farmers and producers collectively participate** in decision-making, peer inspections, and mutual verification of practices, ultimately declaring the produce as organic.

- Food Safety Regulation has made it mandatory for organic products to be certified under NPOP or PGS for being sold in the domestic market under the **Jaivik Bharat logo**.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- The schemes stress on **end-to-end support to farmers** engaged in organic farming i.e. from **production to processing, certification and marketing** and **post-harvest management**.
- **The objective** of the PKVY is to advance a scalable model of eco-agriculture that integrates **low-cost, chemical-free techniques** with farmer-led collectives, enhancing **food safety, income generation**, and environmental sustainability.
- **Cluster Model:** Farmers are mobilised in groups of **20 hectares** to collectively adopt organic practices, ensuring uniform standards and cost-effectiveness.
- Under the scheme farmers adopting organic farming practices are being assisted with **₹31,500 per hectare** for a **three-year period**.



Source: MyScheme Portal

Other Initiatives for Organic Farming

- **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER):** The scheme is being implemented exclusively in the NE States to support farmers engaged in organic farming.
- **Jaivik Kheti portal** is a one stop solution for facilitating organic farmers to sell their organic produce and promoting organic farming and its benefits. This portal caters various stakeholders like local groups, individual farmers, buyers and input suppliers.

- In 2020–21, the Government launched the **Large Area Certification (LAC) programme** to fast-track certification in regions where chemical farming has never been practiced (tribal belts, islands, eco-preserved zones).
 - ♦ The LAC reduces the conversion period from 2–3 years to a few months.

Way Ahead

- Scale up PKVY from small clusters to large, connected organic belts that create rural hubs of sustainable farming.
- Invest in region-specific research, farmer training, and grassroots innovations to make organic practices more practical and profitable.
- Encourage rural youth to turn into “green entrepreneurs” through organic processing, eco-tourism, and start-ups linked to organic value chains.

Source: [PIB](#)

RBI GRANTS SRO STATUS TO FINANCE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (FIDC)

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has officially recognised the Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC) as the Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for the non-banking financial company (NBFC) sector.

What are Self-Regulatory Organisations (SROs)?

- The RBI's Omnibus Framework describes an SRO as a **non-governmental organisation** that is authorised by a regulator to regulate and oversee a particular industry or sector.
 - ♦ **SROs derive authority** from membership agreements and operate within the boundaries defined by law.
- **Eligibility:** The RBI's guidelines require an SRO to be a **Section 8 not-for-profit company**, have diversified shareholding (no entity may hold more than **10 %** of capital) and maintain sufficient net worth.
- **SRO Responsibilities:**
 - ♦ Draft and enforce a **code of conduct** covering governance, risk management, responsible lending, and customer protection.
 - ♦ **Monitor compliance**, undertake surveillance, and address misconduct swiftly.

- ♦ Establish **grievance redressal and dispute-resolution** mechanisms.
- ♦ **Educate borrowers** about lending terms, financial literacy, and conduct staff training programs.
- ♦ **Early-warning signals:** By being close to the industry, SROs can alert regulators to emerging risks or misconduct.

Non-Banking Financial Corporation (NBFCs)?

- NBFCs are companies registered under the **Companies Act, 1956**, engaged in financial activities such as;
 - ♦ Offering loans and advances,
 - ♦ Acquiring shares, stocks, bonds, debentures, or other marketable securities,
 - ♦ Operating deposit schemes in various formats.
- It does not include any institution whose **principal business is that of agriculture activity, industrial activity, purchase or sale of any goods** (other than securities) or providing any services and sale/purchase/construction of immovable property.

Need for an SRO in the NBFC Sector

- Rapid Growth and Sectoral Importance: NBFCs contribute nearly **one-third of total lending** in India and serve underserved segments like MSMEs, housing, vehicle finance, and micro-enterprises.
 - ♦ Their growing role demanded a **structured mechanism** to enforce discipline, standard practices, and accountability.
- **Pressure on RBI:** RBI directly supervises thousands of NBFCs, creating a huge regulatory burden.
 - ♦ An SRO acts as an extended arm of the regulator, easing oversight while ensuring compliance.
- **Sector-Specific Challenges:**
 - ♦ **Crises and liquidity issues:** IL&FS default (2018) and other asset-liability mismatches highlighted systemic vulnerabilities.
 - ♦ **Governance gaps:** Weak corporate governance, poor risk management, and opaque ownership structures in some NBFCs.
 - ♦ **Shadow banking risks:** NBFCs perform bank-like functions without being banks, posing contagion risks.

- ♦ **Heterogeneity:** Diverse operations across housing, vehicle loans, gold loans, micro-lending, and infrastructure finance complicate regulatory monitoring.

Way Ahead

- **Comprehensive code of conduct:** The code should cover governance, risk management, responsible lending, transparency, fair debt collection, cyber-security, data privacy and ESG considerations.
- **Set up dedicated committees** for compliance monitoring, audits and consumer complaints.
- **Promote financial literacy:** Develop consumer-education campaigns explaining NBFC products, interest rates, repayment terms and dispute resolution.

Source: [BS](#)

PHILIPPINES PIONEERS CORAL LARVAE CRYOBANK

Context

- The Philippines has launched **Southeast Asia's first coral larvae cryobank** to preserve coral genetic diversity and protect reef ecosystems.

Coral Cryobank Initiative

- The initiative involves collaboration among research institutions in the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.
- The objective is to freeze and preserve coral larvae, ensuring long-term protection of coral genetic diversity.

What is Cryopreservation?

- Cryopreservation is the preservation of living cells or tissues at ultra-low temperatures (**-196°C**), halting all biological activity for long-term storage.
- Coral larvae are first treated with **cryoprotectant solutions** (glycerol, ethylene glycol, DMSO) to replace water and prevent ice formation.
- Through **vitrification**, larvae are plunged into liquid nitrogen, turning into a glass-like state that avoids cell damage.

About the Coral Triangle

- The Coral Triangle also known as the **Amazon of the Seas** spans around **6 million sq. km** across **Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste**.

- It encompasses portions of **2 biogeographic regions:** the Indonesian-Philippines Region, and the Far Southwestern Pacific Region.
- It is home to more than **75%** of the world's coral species, **a third of reef fish**, vast mangrove forests, and six out of seven marine turtle species.



Threats to Coral Ecosystems

- **Climate change** is driving **coral bleaching** and **habitat destruction** through rising ocean temperatures.
- According to the **Status of Coral Reefs of the World 2020** report, **14%** of the world's corals were lost between 2009 and 2018.
- **Destructive fishing, pollution, and unregulated tourism** further accelerate reef decline.

What are Corals?

- Corals are **invertebrates** that belong to a large group of animals called **Cnidaria**.
 - ♦ Corals are formed by **multiple small, soft organisms known as polyps**.
 - ♦ They secrete a **rocky chalk-like (calcium carbonate) exoskeleton** around themselves for protection.
 - ♦ **Coral reefs** are therefore created by **millions of tiny polyps forming large carbonate structures**.
- **Appearance:** Corals range in color from **red to purple and even blue**, but are most commonly shades of **brown and green**.
 - ♦ They get most of their colors from the **millions of microscopic algae that grow inside each polyp's tissues**.
- **There are three types of coral reefs** – fringing reefs, barrier reefs and atolls.
 - ♦ **Fringing reefs form along shorelines, barrier reefs form in open water and atolls are circular reefs that have formed around sunken volcanoes.**

- **Significance:** They provide food, shelter, resting and breeding grounds to a quarter of all marine life, acting as nurseries and refuges to protect critical biodiversity.

Coral Bleaching

- Corals have adapted to **survive and grow within a specific temperature range**.
- **Coral Bleaching** occurs when sea temperatures rise too high and corals expel their algae, subsequently turning white.
- The phenomenon also occurs due to **low salinity, cold waters or pollution**, regional and global mass bleaching events.

Source: [TH](#)

NEWS IN SHORT

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF VANDE MATRAM

In Context

- The Union Cabinet announced nationwide celebration of the **150th anniversary of the national song 'Vande Mataram'**.

About

- Vande Mataram composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in Sanskrit and first appeared in the novel **Anandamath (1882)**.
- Its first public recital by **Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 INC** session gave it national exposure.
- The national song has **equal status with Jana Gana Mana**, as declared by a 1950 Presidential order.
- Article 51A(a) mandates respect for the anthem but not for a national song, indicating a sensitive balance.
- The song was a rallying cry for anti-colonial revolutionaries and a symbol of collective resolve during the independence movement.

Source: IE

SCHEDULE M NORMS

In News

- The Union Health Ministry has mandated strict compliance with the revised Schedule M norms for pharmaceutical manufacturers in India, following recent incidents of diethylene glycol (DEG) contamination in cough syrups.

What is Schedule M?

- Schedule M is part of the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**, prescribing Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for pharmaceuticals in India.
- It establishes minimum standards for plant, equipment, hygiene, and processes to ensure drug safety and quality.

Key Features of the Revised Schedule M

- The recent major revision in 2023–24 aligns Indian GMP norms with WHO-GMP and PIC/S international standards, strengthening India's position as a global pharmaceutical manufacturing hub.
- Compliance with the revised Schedule M became mandatory for all pharmaceutical units by December 31, 2025, with large units under stricter timelines and small and medium enterprises given conditional extensions.
- All records must be Attributable, Legible, Contemporaneous, Original, Accurate, Complete, Consistent, Enduring, and Available to ensure data reliability.

About Diethylene Glycol (DEG)

- DEG is a **colorless, odorless, syrupy industrial chemical (formula C₄H₁₀O₃)** used as a solvent, antifreeze, and in plastics but not approved for pharmaceutical or food use.
- Pharmaceutical contamination happens when industrial-grade DEG is mistakenly or fraudulently substituted for pharmaceutical-grade glycerine or propylene glycol during drug formulation, often due to poor quality control or cost-cutting.
- DEG contamination has tragically led to deaths linked to adulterated cough syrups like Coldrif.

Source: TH

LEPROSY IN INDIA

Context

- India's leprosy prevalence rate has fallen from **57.2 per 10,000 population** in 1981 to just **0.57 in 2025**.

What is Leprosy?

- **Leprosy, or Hansen's disease**, is a chronic infectious disease caused by **bacteria Mycobacterium leprae**.
- **Symptoms** include discoloured skin patches, lack of ability to feel touch, pressure, pain, heat and cold, muscle weakness, non-healing ulcers, deformities particularly in hands, feet and face and inability to close eyes and poor vision.

- **Leprosy is transmitted** through droplets from the nose and mouth during close and frequent contact with untreated cases.
- Leprosy can be **multibacillary or paucibacillary**. It refers to classifications based on the number of Mycobacterium leprae bacteria present and the severity of the disease.
 - ♦ While **multibacillary leprosy shows a high density** of bacilli on slit-skin smear examination, **paucibacillary leprosy cases show only a few** or no bacilli on slit-skin smear examination.
- The introduction of **Multidrug Therapy (MDT) in 1983** in India revolutionized treatment of leprosy.
 - ♦ Early diagnosis and treatment with MDT can prevent disabilities and deformities.

National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)

- The NLEP is a centrally sponsored scheme under the **National Health Mission (NHM)**.
- **Major Initiatives under NLEP:**
 - ♦ **National Strategic Plan and Roadmap for Leprosy 2023-27:** The strategy document and roadmap outline the strategic interventions and lay out a clear-cut roadmap to achieve the goal of interruption in transmission of leprosy by 2027.
 - ♦ **Leprosy screening** has been integrated with the activities of comprehensive primary health care under **Ayushman Bharat Yojana** for screening of people above **30 years of age**.
 - ♦ **Nikusth 2.0:** A revamped web-based ICT portal for data recording, reporting, and monitoring of leprosy activities for further strengthening services related to diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of leprosy patients was launched in **2023**.

International Recognition & Partnerships

- In the **World Health Assembly Commitment (1991)**, India committed to the World Health Assembly's goal of eliminating leprosy as a public health problem by the year 2000.
- WHO supported India's **Modified Leprosy Elimination Campaigns (MLECs)**, diagnostic protocol shifts, and Special Action Projects for hard-to-reach populations.
- It also piloted the **COMBI (Communication for Behavioural Impact) strategy** in Bihar.

Source: [PIB](#)

NAMCHIK NAMPHUK COAL BLOCK

In News

- Arunachal Pradesh has launched its first commercial coal mining project at the **Namchik-Namphuk coal block** in Changlang district, marking a milestone in Northeast India's resource development and energy self-reliance.

About Namchik-Namphuk Coal Block

- **Location:** Changlang district, southeastern Arunachal Pradesh, part of the Upper Assam coal belt region.
- **Reserves:** Estimated 1.5 crore tonnes of coal, enabling long-term production viability.
- **Economic Impact:** Expected to generate 100 crore annual revenue for the state.
- **Environmental Features:** Operates under Mission Green Coal Regions, focusing on land reclamation, afforestation, and eco-responsible mining.
- **Social Impact:** Creation of local employment; reduction of illegal mining activities.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Supports the PM EAST vision — Empower, Act, Strengthen, Transform — for balanced Northeast development.

Commercial Coal Mining in India

- **Definition:** Allows private players to mine coal and sell it in the open market, ending Coal India Ltd.'s monopoly.
- **Policy Origin:** Introduced under the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015.
 - ♦ Operationalised in 2020 through AatmaNirbhar Bharat reforms.
- **Objectives:** Boost domestic coal production and cut imports.
 - ♦ Encourage private investment, adoption of advanced mining technology.
- **Governing Laws:** Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
 - ♦ Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015
 - ♦ Related environmental and land laws.

Source: [PIB](#)

FALLING CAMEL COUNTS

Context

- The **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying** is planning to launch the **National Camel Sustainability Initiative (NCSI)** — a national mission aimed at **reversing the steady decline in India's camel population**.

About

- India is witnessing a **rapid and alarming decline in its camel population**, especially in the **traditionally camel-rearing states of Rajasthan and Gujarat**.
- According to the **20th Livestock Census**, India's camel population stood at 2.52 lakh in 2019, down from about 11 lakh in 1977 and 4 lakh in 2013.
 - Nearly 90%** of these camels are concentrated in Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- The NCSI, would bring together the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, the Ministries of Environment, Rural Development and Tourism, and State governments, to ensure coordinated action.

Camels in India

- India mainly has one species of camel:** Dromedary Camel (*Camelus dromedarius*) – one-humped camel, adapted to desert conditions.
- Chinkara and Camel** are the two State Animals of Rajasthan.
- Economic & Cultural Importance:**
 - Transport & Labor:** Traditionally used for carrying goods, plowing, and transport in desert regions.
 - Milk Production:** Camel milk is nutritious and in demand.
 - Tourism:** Camel safaris are popular in Rajasthan.
 - Cultural Festivals:** Camel fairs, especially the Bikaner Camel Festival, celebrate the animal.
 - Defense Use:** Camels are used by the Border Security Force (BSF) in desert patrols.

Source: IE

PHOSPHINE

Context

- Astronomers detected **trace amounts of phosphine** in the atmosphere of a **brown dwarf called Wolf 1130C**, located dozens of light-years from Earth.

Phosphine

- Phosphine (PH₃)** is a molecule made of three hydrogen atoms and one phosphorus atom.
- On Earth, it is mostly produced by microbial life in swamps and animal intestines.
- In 2020, phosphine detection on Venus** sparked debates about possible life there.
 - Phosphine is also present on gas giants like Jupiter and Saturn, showing it can form in uninhabitable environments.
- Significance:** It helps scientists understand how phosphine forms naturally and could refine the search for phosphine as a potential biosignature (hint of life) on other planets.

What are brown dwarfs?

- Brown dwarfs** are **celestial bodies** that share some **similarities with stars and others with planets**.
 - These objects form **like stars from collapsing clouds of gas and dust**. However, they do not have enough mass to consistently fuse hydrogen, a process that heats a star and makes it shine. That is why they are often known as **"failed stars"**.
- They have **atmospheres similar to gas giant planets** such as Jupiter and Saturn.
 - Their atmospheres can consist of clouds and molecules like H₂O.
 - Brown dwarfs can also be up to **70 times more massive than Jupiter**.
- Significance:**
 - They help astronomers better understand the conditions that are necessary for the formation of stars and planets.
 - Determining the abundance and distribution of brown dwarfs gives key information on the distribution of mass in the universe to astronomers.

Source: IE

EXERCISE KONKAN-25

Context

- India and the United Kingdom conducted the 2025 edition of Exercise KONKAN, an annual bilateral maritime exercise that began in 2004.

About

- The exercise comprised a **Harbour Phase**, involving professional exchanges, cross-deck visits, and operational discussions, and a **Sea Phase** featuring complex drills in anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare, along with carrier-based flying operations.
- The 2025 edition marks the first-ever participation of both nations' **Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs)** — the UK's HMS Prince of Wales and India's INS Vikrant.

- Exercise KONKAN reinforces the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership under the India–UK Vision 2035**, highlighting a shared commitment to a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.

Other India-UK Bilateral Exercises

- AJEYA WARRIOR (Army), Exercise Indradhanush (Air Force), and Exercise Cobra Warrior (multinational air exercise hosted by the UK).

Source: [TH](#)

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