

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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NATIONAL PRESS DAY

In Context

- India celebrated **National Press Day** honouring the essential role of a free and responsible press in our society.

About

- National Press Day observed on 16 November, marks the **establishment of the Press Council of India (PCI) in 1966**, later reconstituted in 1979 under new legislation.
 - The idea for the Council was first proposed by the **First Press Commission in 1956**, which emphasized the need to protect press freedom and promote ethical reporting.
- This year's theme focuses on **safeguarding press credibility amidst rising misinformation**, highlighting the growing importance of accurate and ethical reporting.

India's Media Landscape

- India is one of the world's largest and most diverse media ecosystems, spanning print, television, radio, OTT platforms, and digital news.
- India's vibrant media landscape continues to grow, registered publications have risen from 60,143 in 2004–05 to 1.54 lakh in 2024–25, reflecting the expanding reach and strength of the press.

Importance of Media

- The media is often referred to as the **fourth pillar of democracy**, playing a crucial role in **shaping public opinion**, driving development, and holding power to account.
- Historically, newspapers played a **vital role in India's freedom struggle**.
- The media and entertainment industry **contributes significantly** to **GDP**, employment, and India's global cultural footprint.
- Media promotes **communal harmony**, inclusivity, and awareness, especially in diverse societies.

Challenges

- OTT platforms and social media have transformed consumption, **creating stress for traditional media**.
- Concerns over media bias**, political influence, and attacks on press freedom undermine trust.
- New acts raise fears of **excessive government control**.

- Declining ad revenues and unfair compensation** models for digital content threaten viability.
- With large internet users, **safeguarding against fake news and online threats is critical**.

Institutional Framework Governing the Media

- India's media governance framework is built on institutions, laws, and initiatives that safeguard press freedom, promote ethical journalism, modernize regulation, and support media professionals.
- Press Registrar General of India (PRGI):** Established in 1956, now statutory under the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023 (PRP Act).
 - It oversees registration and regulation of print media, with the Press Sewa Portal enabling a fully digital, paperless system.
 - Press Sewa Portal** is a major digital reform under PRGI.
- Press Council of India (PCI):** Autonomous body under the Press Council Act, 1978. It handles complaints on press freedom violations and enforces Norms of Journalistic Conduct.
 - PCI in 2023 released guidelines for reporting on natural disasters
- Press and Registration of Periodicals (PRP) Act, 2023:** Modernizes colonial-era law, introducing online registration.
 - Fully digitises title allotment and registration of periodicals.
- Institutions & Schemes:** Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) (1965) provides training and capacity building.
- Journalist Welfare Scheme** (2001, revised in 2019) offers financial support to journalists and families in hardship.

Way Ahead

- India's media sector, vital to democracy and global culture, must evolve responsibly to sustain growth and credibility.
- This requires balanced regulation that protects freedom while addressing digital challenges, stronger safeguards for press independence, and support for digital adaptation with fair compensation.
- Building capacity in training, cybersecurity, and ethical journalism is essential, alongside leveraging India's strengths in content creation, animation, and VFX for global positioning.

Key Activities on National Press Day

- **National Awards for Excellence in Journalism**
 - ♦ Awarded annually by PCI.
 - ♦ Recognises journalists for outstanding work.
 - ♦ The Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award is the highest honour.
- **National Press Day Souvenir**
 - ♦ Contains messages from national leaders.
 - ♦ Features articles by media experts.
 - ♦ Highlights the achievements of award winners

India's Media Regulatory Architecture (Three-Tier Framework)**PRINT MEDIA (Press Council of India (PCI))**

- Norms of Journalistic Conduct (ethical standards).
- PCI can warn/censure under Section 14.
- Regulates fake, defamatory, or misleading print content.

TELEVISION (Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995)

- Enforces Programme Code.
- Prohibits obscene, defamatory, communal, or false content.
- (2021 Amendment) introduced a three-tier grievance system.

DIGITAL MEDIA – IT Rules, 2021

- Code of Ethics for digital news and OTT.
- Age classifications, grievance officers, and compliance norms.
- Section 69A of IT Act, power to block content/platforms in the interest of sovereignty and integrity.

World Press Freedom Index 2025

- RSF (Reporters Without Borders), an international watchdog releases the World Press Freedom Index annually, ranking 180 countries using qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- India has ranked 151st in 2025, with a total score of 32.96, showing an improvement of 8 places from 159th in 2024.
- Key concerns affecting India's ranking include:
 - ♦ Economic pressures on newsrooms

- ♦ Concentration of media ownership
- ♦ Political and legal pressures
- ♦ Online harassment and safety concerns for journalists.

Sources: [PIB](#)

EAM VISIT TO QATAR**Context**

- The External Affairs Minister met **Qatar's top leadership** and discussed major aspects of the bilateral relationship, including energy and trade, as well as regional and global issues.

Brief on India-Qatar Relations

- **Strategic Partnership:** In 2025 India and Qatar have signed an agreement to elevate their ties to the level of a **strategic partnership**.
 - ♦ **India currently has strategic partnerships with four other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council** – the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Kuwait.
- **Economic and Trade Relations:** Qatar is the **largest provider of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to India**, supplying 10.91 million metric tonnes of LNG and 4.92 million metric tonnes of LPG in FY 2023-24.
 - ♦ The current annual trade is worth **\$14.08 billion**.
 - ♦ Two sides also signed a **double taxation avoidance treaty** and also planned on **doubling their trade to \$28 billion within five years**.
- **Defence:** India participates in the biennial Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX).
 - ♦ **Exercise Zair-Al-Bahr** is a joint naval exercise between the Indian Navy and the Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF).
 - ♦ The India-Qatar Defence Cooperation Agreement was signed in **2008 and extended for five years in 2018**, it is managed through the **Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC)**.
- **Labor and Diaspora:** India has a large expatriate community in Qatar, numbering over 700,000.
 - ♦ The Indian diaspora in Qatar plays a crucial role in the country's development, particularly in construction and other sectors.

- **Regional Cooperation: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** is a **political and economic alliance** of **six Middle Eastern countries**—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman. It was established in **1981**.
 - ♦ India engages regularly with GCC and aims to deepen its relationship with the GCC.



Challenges/Concerns

- **The Hamas–Israel war** and shipping attacks in the Red Sea affect India's energy security and economic growth.
 - ♦ India remains cautious in Middle Eastern politics, balancing relations with the Gulf, Iran, and Israel.
- **Delay in Connectivity Projects:** The conflict has delayed progress for the I2U2 group since 2023.
 - ♦ India urges economic initiatives like **I2U2 and IMEC** to progress despite the conflict.
- **FTAs with GCC:** Delays in finalizing the **India–GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** due to changes in the GCC's trade negotiator.
 - ♦ Reaching an agreement that satisfies all GCC states remains a key challenge.

Way Forward

- The India–Qatar partnership is strategic, energy-critical, and diaspora-centric.

- Strengthening institutional frameworks, expanding economic complementarities, and ensuring the welfare of the Indian community will be key to future-proofing this vital West Asian partnership.

Source: TH

PRECISION BIOTHERAPEUTICS

Context

- **Precision biotherapeutics** bring together genetic science, molecular biology, and data analytics to design therapies that identify and rectify the cause of illness.

What are precision biotherapeutics?

- Precision biotherapeutics refers to **medical interventions** that are designed and optimised **based on a patient's unique genetic, molecular, or cellular profile**.
- The field draws on **multiple technologies such as:**
 - ♦ **Genomic and Proteomic Analysis:** Decoding a person's genetic and protein signatures to identify mutations or dysfunctions causing the disease.
 - ♦ **Gene Editing Therapies:** Directly modifying genes to correct underlying problems (for example, CRISPR-based treatments for blood disorders).
 - ♦ **mRNA and nucleic acid therapeutics:** Using RNA molecules to instruct cells to produce specific proteins or suppress harmful ones.
 - ♦ **Monoclonal Antibodies and biologics:** Laboratory-engineered molecules that bind to precise disease targets, such as cancer cells or viral protein.
 - ♦ **AI-driven drug discovery:** It involves leveraging big data and machine learning to predict how molecules interact within the body.

Need for the Precision Biotherapeutics

- **Rising Burden of Complex Diseases: Non-communicable diseases** such as diabetes, cardiovascular illness, and cancers account for nearly **65% of deaths in the country**.
- **Precision:** For cancer especially, conventional therapies (like chemotherapy) often cause significant collateral damage; targeted biologics or gene/cell therapies can be more precise.
- **The genetic diversity of India:** India has a very genetically diverse population, which means "one-size-fits-all" drugs may not work equally across sub-populations.

- **Local Solutions:** Pharmaceuticals made and tested in foreign countries might not work effectively in the Indian context.

Challenges

- **Lack of Regulatory Framework:** India lacks a clear regulatory framework for the different technologies that form the basis of gene and cell therapies.
 - ♦ Most guidelines limit the use of emerging technologies for therapeutic purposes, but the scope of therapy is not defined.
- **Cost & Affordability:** Precision biotherapeutics are expensive to develop and manufacture. This could make them inaccessible to large segments of India's population.
- **Infrastructure & Capacity:** There is limited local manufacturing capacity for biologics and advanced therapies.

India's Efforts

- The Department of Biotechnology has identified precision biotherapeutics as **one of the six focus areas** under the **Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment policy**.
- **Mapping:** Indian research institutions such as the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, the National Institute of Biomedical Genomics, and the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute are leading efforts to **map genetic diversity and disease susceptibility across populations**.
- **In the private sector,** several biopharma companies are exploring precision therapies.

Way Ahead

- The global precision medicine market is **projected to exceed \$22 billion by 2027**.
 - ♦ India's skilled workforce, data analytics strength, and cost advantage position it as a potential hub for affordable precision therapies.
- Without strict data protection and consent frameworks, genomic information could be misused.
- India's expertise in biologics manufacturing will further support the development of cutting-edge therapies for both domestic and international markets.

Source: TH

5TH AUDIT DIWAS

Context

- Recently, the Vice-President of India lauded the **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)** as the **'guardian of the public purse'** during the **5th Audit Diwas** celebration, commemorating the establishment and legacy of CAG.

About

- **Origins of India's Audit Institution:** The **Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of India** is among India's oldest governance bodies.
 - ♦ Its origins date back to **1858**, when a dedicated department led by an **Accountant General** was created.
 - ♦ It was responsible for maintaining accounts and auditing financial transactions of the **East India Company**.
- **Government of India Act, 1858:** It brought a new system of presenting an **annual budget of Imperial Income and Expenditure (1860)**, laying the foundation for **Imperial Audit**.
 - ♦ **First Auditor General:** Sir Edward Drummond became the **first Auditor General of India** on **16 November 1860**, marking a **formal beginning** of institutionalized auditing in India.
 - Since then, 'November 16' is celebrated as Audit Diwas.
- **Evolution After Independence:** The **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India** was recognized as a **constitutional authority** with the adoption of the **Constitution of India in 1950**.
 - ♦ The responsibilities and authority of the CAG evolved through various practices and legislative changes, both during British rule and in post-independence India, strengthening its role as a guardian of public accountability.

Highlights of 5th Audit Diwas (2025)

- **Theme:** 'Guardian of the Public Purse', marking the **166th year of the CAG's institution**.
- **From 'Examination' to 'Partner in Governance':** The audit processes aim to support good governance and strengthen executive accountability, and to become **'a forward-looking instrument of reform, foresight, and innovation'**.
- **Pillars of Transformation:** Stakeholder Engagement, Digital Transformation, Alignment with Viksit Bharat 2047, and Capacity Building.

- **Urban Governance and 'Ease of Living' Audits:** CAG K. Sanjay Murthy announced **plans to assess 101 major cities** on infrastructure; environmental sustainability; and local economic growth;
 - ♦ It marks a shift toward citizen-centric auditing, focusing on urban development and service delivery.

About Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India

- **Constitutional Mandate: Article 148**, which guarantees CAG's independence and authority. The CAG is tasked with:
 - ♦ Auditing all receipts and expenditures of the Union Government and the State Governments.
 - ♦ Reviewing accounts of **bodies and authorities** substantially **financed by the government**.
 - ♦ Reporting **audit findings to the President of India or Governor of respective states**, which are then tabled in Parliament or State Legislatures.
- **Vision and Values:** The CAG's mission is to promote **accountability, transparency, and good governance** through high-quality auditing. Its core values include **Integrity, Objectivity, Professional Excellence and Public Interest**.
- **Types of Audits:**
 - ♦ **Compliance Audit:** Ensures adherence to rules and regulations.
 - ♦ **Financial Audit:** Verifies accuracy of financial statements.
 - ♦ **Performance Audit:** Evaluates efficiency and effectiveness of government programs.
 - ♦ **Environmental Audit:** Assesses ecological impact of public projects.
 - These audits are conducted through a nationwide network of State Audit Offices and specialized wings.
- **Advisory and Governance Functions:** The CAG chairs the **Government Accounting Standards Advisory Board (GASAB)**, which develops accounting norms for public sector entities.
 - ♦ It convenes the **Audit Advisory Board**, comprising experts from various fields to refine audit methodologies.

- **New Initiatives by CAG:** The CAG has approved the creation of **two new specialized cadres**, aimed to be **operational from January 1, 2026**, within the **Indian Audit and Accounts Department (IA&AD)**:

- ♦ Central Revenue Audit (CRA) Cadre;
- ♦ Central Expenditure Audit (CEA) Cadre;

International Engagement

- The CAG of India is an active member of the **International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI)**, contributing to global standards in public auditing.
- It undertakes international audits and collaborates with other SAIs for capacity building.

[Source: New IE](#)

INDIA UNVEILED PLANS TO ESTABLISH PLATFORM FOR CLIMATE AND NATURE FINANCE

In News

- At COP30 in Belém, Brazil, India joined 13 countries and African Islands States Climate Commission (AISCC) to announce the national "Climate & Nature Finance Platforms."
- ♦ These platforms will be coordinated through the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**.

What is the Green Climate Fund (GCF)?

- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the **world's largest dedicated multilateral climate fund, established in 2010** under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- It was established to **help developing countries** respond to climate change by supporting both adaptation and mitigation activities.
- The GCF is central to the implementation of the **Paris Agreement in accordance with Article 9**, supporting developing countries in achieving their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and climate resilience goals.
- It is funded primarily by voluntary contributions from developed countries, with additional support from private sector and other sources.
- **GCF is mandated to invest 50% of its resources to mitigation and 50% to adaptation in grant equivalent.**
- **Headquartered** in Incheon, South Korea.

Why Has India Launched a “Country Platform” for Climate & Nature Finance?

- India already interacts with the GCF. But the current system is fragmented — multiple ministries, institutions, and private players make separate proposals.
- A unified national platform will:
 - Bring all climate-related financing efforts under a single umbrella.
 - Improve coordination between Union Ministries, State governments, and private entities.
 - Speed up proposal preparation and project approvals.
 - Increase access to GCF's low-cost loans and grants.
 - Support India's upcoming National Adaptation Plan.
 - Ensure better tracking of adaptation outcomes through Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) indicators.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

RAULANE FESTIVAL

In News

- The Raulane Festival Himachal Pradesh recently drew attention.

About Raulane Festival

- The Raulane Festival is an ancient, 5,000-year-old traditional festival celebrated in the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh that honors mystical celestial fairies known as **Saunis**.
- Key elements of the festival include two men acting as the symbolic groom (**Raula**) and bride (**Raulane**), fully covered in traditional Kinnauri woollens, adorned with masks and ornaments to represent these mystical beings.
- The pair undertake a slow devotional procession and dance to the **Nagin Narayan Temple**.
- The dance and procession are seen as a channel between the human and spirit worlds, expressing gratitude, protection, and blessings for the community.

Source: TH

ADI KUMBESWARAR TEMPLE

Context

- The kumbabishekam (consecration) of the Adi Kumbeswarar Temple in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, has brought renewed attention to the temple's unique **stone nagaswaram**, a rare wind instrument preserved here.

About the temple

- The Adi Kumbeswarar Temple in Kumbakonam (Thanjavur district, Tamil Nadu) is dedicated to **Lord Shiva**, worshipped as Adi Kumbeswarar in the form of a **lingam**.
- The temple is an **architectural landmark** showcasing the key features of **Dravidian architecture** and is believed to be over **1,300 years old**.
- The temple dates back to the **Chola period (9th century CE)** and was later renovated by the **Nayak rulers**.
- It is one of the **12 Shiva temples** associated with the **Mahamaham festival**, held once every 12 years in Kumbakonam.

Source: [TH](#)

SENKAKU ISLANDS

In News

- A China Coast Guard ship formation conducted a “rights enforcement patrol” near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, escalating tensions with Japan.

The Senkaku Islands

- The Senkaku Islands” is the collective term that refers to a group of islands that includes Uotsuri, Kitakojima, Minamikojima, Kuba, Taisho, Okinokitaiva, Okinominamiwa, and Tobise.
- They are part of Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture.
- They are located in the East China Sea and are also situated approximately 170km from Taiwan and 330km from China.
- Dispute:** The Senkaku Islands have long been a contentious issue in Japan-China relations, with both nations asserting historical claims over the uninhabited rocky chain.
 - At present it is being controlled by the Japanese.

Source :[TH](#)

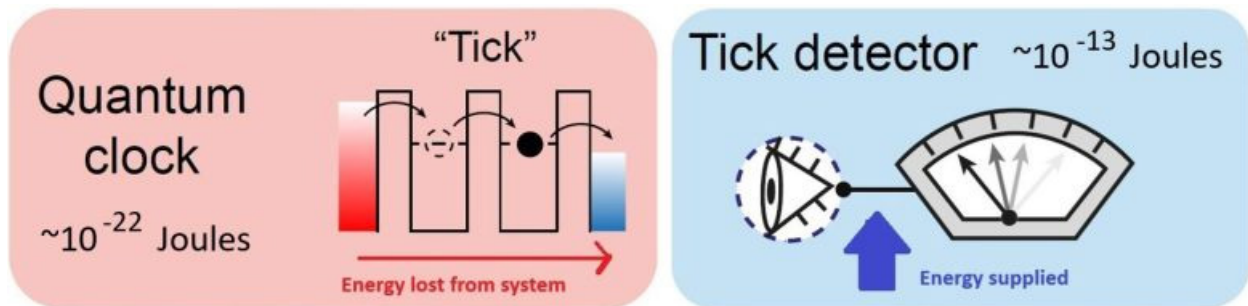
QUANTUM CLOCK

Context

- Scientists are now studying how **timekeeping works at the quantum level by analyzing Quantum Clock.**

About

- Researchers found that **measuring a quantum clock consumes vastly more energy** than the clock's own operation—**up to a billion times more.**
- Reason:** Traditional clocks, from swinging pendulums to atomic oscillators, **depend on irreversible processes** to track time.



- Significance:** This finding overturns the long-standing assumption that **measurement costs in quantum physics are negligible.**
 - It also reveals a striking idea: **observation is what gives time its direction** by making the process irreversible.
 - This result **challenges the common belief** that improving quantum clocks requires better quantum systems.
 - Instead, the researchers argue that progress will depend on developing more efficient ways to detect and interpret the ticks.
- They may accompany solar flares or occur independently, with frequency tied to the 11-year solar cycle—about once a week at solar minimum and up to 2–3 per day at solar maximum.
- CMEs disrupt solar wind, merge with Earth's magnetic field, and transfer large amounts of energy into the magnetosphere.
- This makes them major drivers of geomagnetic storms and substorms, which can damage near-Earth systems but also produce spectacular auroras at high latitudes.

Source : [TH](#)

Source: [TH](#)

CORONAL MASS EJECTION

In News

- Astronomers have, for the first time, detected a **coronal mass ejection (CME)** on a star other than the Sun.

Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)

- Coronal mass ejections are massive bubbles of plasma and magnetic fields expelled from the Sun, often appearing as twisted "flux ropes."

SILIGURI CORRIDOR

Context

- Indian Army sets up **three new garrisons near the strategic Siliguri Corridor.**

About

- There are security concerns amid the **change of regime in Bangladesh** and **concerns over China's growing presence** near the vulnerable Siliguri Corridor.
- The newly operational stations are expected to **strengthen the Army's operational readiness and improve coordination** with the Border Security Force.

About Siliguri Corridor

- It is also referred to as the **Chicken's Neck**, is a narrow strip of land in West Bengal that connects the Northeastern States to the rest of the country



- It is a very important strategic area of eastern India, located between **Mahananda and Teesta river**.

Significance of Siliguri Corridor

- Strategic Connectivity:** If disrupted, it would isolate the north east states, making it difficult for the government to supply essential goods, services, and military support.
- Military and Defense Considerations:** It lies close to sensitive international borders, particularly with China, Nepal, and Bangladesh.
 - Securing it ensures unhindered movement of Indian forces and supplies in the event of a conflict.
- Geopolitical Vulnerability:** The narrowness of the corridor makes it vulnerable to blockages or control by adversaries.
 - Any disruption could sever India's access to the northeast, giving external powers an opportunity to influence or destabilize the region.

Source: **TH**

