

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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## WORLD AIDS DAY

### Context

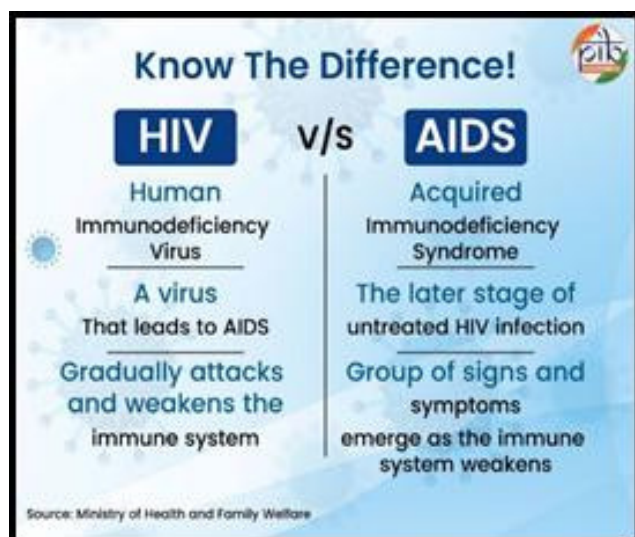
- **World AIDS Day** is observed on **December 1** every year.

### About

- It is observed **every year** to **raise awareness** about the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- It was first marked in **1988** by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Theme 2025:** Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.
  - ♦ This theme highlights the urgency of addressing disruptions caused by pandemics, conflicts, and inequalities that limit access to care.

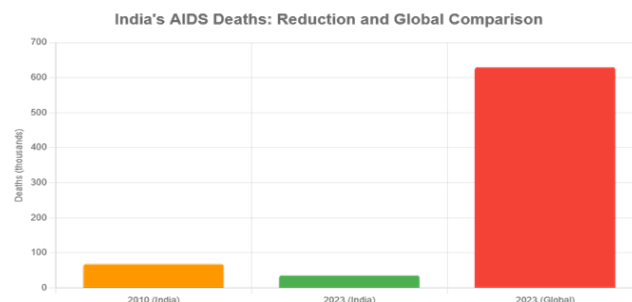
### HIV AIDS

- **Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)** is a virus that attacks the body's immune system.
  - ♦ **HIV targets** the body's white blood cells, weakening the immune system. This makes it **easier to get sick** with diseases like tuberculosis, infections and some cancers.
  - ♦ **Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)** occurs at the most advanced stage of infection.
- **Spread:** HIV is spread from the body fluids of an infected person, including blood, breast milk, semen and vaginal fluids. It can also spread from a mother to her baby.
- **Treatment:** There is no cure for HIV infection. It is treated with antiretroviral drugs, which stop the virus from replicating in the body. Untreated HIV can progress to AIDS, often after many years.



### HIV AIDS in India

- There has been a decline in infection from **0.33% in 2010 to 0.20 in 2024**.
- India's prevalence is **significantly lower than the global average** of 0.7%.
- India's new infections represent only about **5% of the global total** (1.3 million in 2024).



### The National AIDS Control Programme (NACP)

- It has evolved through **five phases**, shifting from **basic awareness to comprehensive prevention, testing, treatment, and sustainability**.
- **NACP I (1992–1999):** It was India's first comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and control programme.
  - ♦ **Aim:** Slow the spread of HIV and reduce morbidity, mortality, and overall impact of AIDS.
- **NACP II (1999–2006):** Strengthen long-term national capacity to respond to HIV/AIDS.
- **NACP III (2007–2012):** Halt and reverse the HIV epidemic by 2012.
  - ♦ **Strategy:** Scale up prevention among High-Risk Groups (HRGs) and the general population.
- **NACP IV (2012–2017):** 50% reduction in new infections (compared to 2007 baseline).
  - ♦ Extended (2017–2021) to advance the goal of Ending AIDS by **2030**.
  - ♦ **Major initiatives during extension:** HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017)- It prohibits discrimination against people living with HIV (PLHIV).
  - ♦ **Mission Sampark:** Its purpose was to "bring back" people living with HIV (PLHIV) who had stopped antiretroviral therapy (ART).
  - ♦ Routine Universal Viral Load monitoring.
- **NACP V (2021–2026):** Launched as a Central Sector Scheme, aims to build on past achievements and address persistent challenges.
  - ♦ The goal of this Phase is to support the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal**



3.3 by helping end the HIV/AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by **2030**.

### Conclusion

- India's AIDS decline is more prominent than the global average, supported significantly by broadened testing, enhanced access to antiretroviral therapy, focused outreach to high-risk groups, and initiatives to combat stigma, all implemented through collaborative state and community actions.

Source: TH

## DURAND LINE: THE FRAGILE FRONTIER

### Context

- The collapse of peace talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan has brought renewed focus on the long-disputed Durand Line, one of South Asia's most sensitive and contested borders.

### Historical Background of the Durand Line

- The Durand Line is a roughly **2,640-kilometre** frontier from the **Iran** border in the west to the **China** border in the east, passing through the **Karakoram mountains, Hindu Kush ranges, and the Registan desert**.
- It was delineated in **1893** through an agreement between **Sir Henry Mortimer Durand**, the Foreign Secretary of British India, and **Emir Abdur Rahman Khan of Afghanistan**.
- The agreement **divided Pashtun tribal lands**, split ethnic communities, and transferred control of Balochistan to British India.



### Post-Partition Developments

- Pakistan inherited the **Durand Line** as its international border.
- Afghanistan**, however, **rejected the legitimacy** of the agreement, arguing that it was a product of colonial coercion, limited in duration and never accepted by the Afghan people.

- Pashtunistan Demand:** Pashtuns on both sides sought an independent state named Pashtunistan, further complicating Pakistan–Afghanistan relations.
- Taliban's Position:** Like previous Afghan governments, the Taliban also refuses to recognize the Durand Line as an international border.

### Recent Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan

- Border Fencing by Pakistan:** Pakistan began constructing a fence along the Durand Line in **2017** to curb insurgency and illegal crossings.
  - Afghanistan sees this as a unilateral and illegitimate move.
- Collapsed Peace Talks:** The latest round of Pakistan–Taliban talks mediated by Turkey and Qatar failed, accompanied by cross-border firing and retaliatory operations.

### Impact on the region

- Economic strain on Afghanistan:** Afghanistan's heavy reliance on transit trade through Pakistan makes any closure catastrophic for daily commerce and relief operations.
- Erosion of Pakistan's Influence:** Instability jeopardizes Pakistan's ambition to serve as a trade corridor linking South Asia with Central Asia.
- Strategic Opportunity for India:** Afghanistan may pursue closer economic ties with **India (through Chabahar Port and the International North–South Transport Corridor)**, bypassing Pakistan.
- People-to-People Strain:** Markets, border villages, and families straddling the frontier bear the brunt of disruptions.
- Security Concerns Over Terror Spillovers:** Instability along the Durand Line increases the flow of arms, drugs and terror financing into the region.
  - Groups like LeT and JeM have historically used Afghanistan–Pakistan instability to regroup, posing risks for India.

### Way Ahead

- Pakistan and Afghanistan must **institutionalise regular security and border-management talks** to prevent miscalculation and retaliatory escalation.
- Reopening border crossings** under mutually agreed protocols will stabilise trade and reduce humanitarian distress.

- **Confidence-building measures** involving tribal elders, civil society and border communities can help manage local tensions.

#### Concluding remarks

- The turmoil along the Durand Line reflects deeper issues like colonial legacy, ethnic fragmentation, Pakistan's coercive diplomacy, and persistent insecurity.
- For lasting peace, both countries need sustained diplomatic engagement, respect for regional sensitivities, and cooperative security mechanisms.

Source: TH

## THE MANY ROLES OF SUGARCANE IN INDIA AND THE WORLD

### Context

- A recent study, "The genomic footprints of wild *Saccharum* species trace domestication, diversification, and modern breeding of sugarcane", analysed **the genomes of 390 sugarcane varieties** from **Australia, Brazil, China, France, French Polynesia, India, Japan, and the US**.

### Findings

- These plants were **hybrids of a variety of genes**, with multiple chromosomes in them (polyploidy).
  - ♦ **Such polyploidy** had occurred due to commercial transport by human breeders, who transported and sold sugarcane across various states in a country.
  - ♦ **Polyploidy** is the heritable condition of possessing more than two complete sets of chromosomes.
- Upon genetic analysis, the researchers found that **Arunachal Pradesh had the most diverse sugarcane breeds**.
- The authors discussed the chemical composition of sugarcane and its potential bioactivities, explored its applications in medicine, and charted the potential direction of future research.

### Sugarcane Production in India

- About 4,400 lakh tonnes of sugarcane were produced in 2024-2025, particularly **across 13 States**.
- In India, sugarcane is mainly grown in two regions: the subtropical north and the tropical south.
  - ♦ The northern belt includes Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Punjab, while the southern

belt covers Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

- ♦ **The top five States** by production in 2018-2019 to 2023-2024 were Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.
- India has been the **largest consumer and second largest producer** of sugar in the world.

### Climatic Conditions

- The sugarcane prospers at temperatures between 20°C and 35°C and requires 75 to 150 cm of rain annually.
- Prefers fertile and well-drained soils and needs a lot of sunlight.
- A cold, dry season during ripening and harvesting is ideal.

### Challenges

- **Water-Intensive Crop:** Sugarcane requires 1,500–2,500 mm of water annually; most cultivation relies on groundwater irrigation, causing depletion, especially in Maharashtra and UP.
- **Low Yield and Regional Variations:** Yields vary sharply across states due to uneven irrigation facilities, soil health issues, and poor seed quality.
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Sugarcane is highly sensitive to temperature, rainfall patterns, and humidity.
  - ♦ Irregular monsoons, droughts, heatwaves, and flooding affect sucrose content and overall yield.
- **Declining Soil Fertility:** Continuous monocropping and excessive chemical fertiliser use cause: soil nutrient imbalance, reduced organic matter, increased soil salinity and alkalinity.
- **Pests and Diseases:** Major issues: borers, white grubs, pyrilla, and red rot disease.
- **Labour Shortages:** Sugarcane requires intensive manual labour for planting, harvesting, and loading.
- **Delayed Payments by Sugar Mills:** State Advised Price (SAP) and Fair & Remunerative Price (FRP) often do not match mills' financial capacity.
  - ♦ Pricing disputes have triggered widespread protests.
- **Post-Harvest Losses:** Sugarcane's seasonal nature creates logistical challenges, as delays beyond 24 hours after harvest cause significant sucrose loss.

- **Challenges of Diversion for Ethanol:** Growing push for ethanol production sometimes creates competition between sugar and ethanol sectors.

#### Government Initiatives

- **The Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP):** The Centre declares FRP under the Sugarcane Control Order, 1966 to ensure farmers receive a minimum guaranteed price.
  - ♦ For the 2025-26, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved an FRP of 355 per quintal at a basic recovery rate of 10.25%.
- **PM-KUSUM for Irrigation Support:** Promote solar pumps to reduce irrigation costs for sugarcane farmers.
  - ♦ Enhances access to reliable, low-cost water for cultivation.
- **Crop Diversification and Intercropping:** The government, through ICAR collaboration, is promoting additive intercropping to address soil degradation and farmer income enhancement.
- **The Indian Council of Agricultural Research** has also established several sugar research institutes across the country that use classical botanical methods and molecular biological methods to improve the variety and yield of sugarcane.
- **Cooperative Sugar Mill Strengthening Scheme:** The government established a 10,000 crore loan scheme through NCDC (National Cooperative Development Corporation) for cooperative sugar mills.
  - ♦ The scheme supports:
    - Setting up ethanol production plants.
    - Establishing cogeneration plants.
    - Meeting working capital requirements.
- **Modified Ethanol Interest Subvention Scheme:** For cooperative sugar mills converting existing sugarcane-based ethanol plants to multi-feedstock plants, the government provides interest subvention at 6% per annum or 50% of charged interest (whichever is lower) for five years.
- **Crop Insurance - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):** Sugarcane qualifies as an insurable annual commercial crop under PMFBY, providing comprehensive coverage against yield losses from natural calamities, pests, diseases, and localized risks.

#### Way Ahead

- The comprehensive government framework demonstrates a multi-dimensional approach

addressing production efficiency, farmer income, mill viability, environmental sustainability, and market stability.

- These measures collectively aim to enhance India's sugarcane productivity from the current 70 tonnes per hectare to 100-110 tonnes per hectare by 2030.

Source: TH

## RUPEE'S DEPRECIATION: GLOBAL VOLATILITY & STRUCTURAL CONCERNS

### Context

- Recent rupee's depreciation against major currencies like the dollar, euro, and yen signals global volatility and deeper structural concerns.

### About Rupees Depreciation

- It refers to the **decline in the value of the Indian rupee** relative to foreign currencies, particularly the US dollar.
- It means that more rupees are needed to buy a unit of foreign currency, when the rupee depreciates.

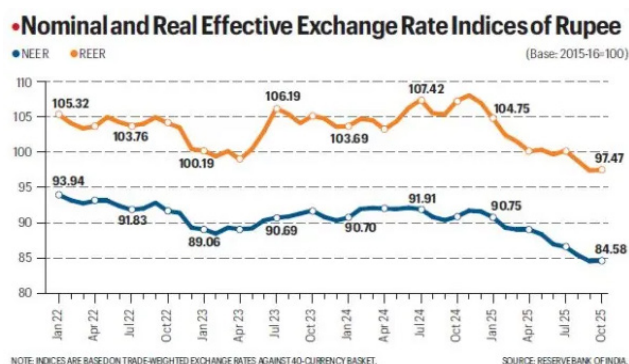
### Key Drivers of Rupee Depreciation

- **Trade Deficit:** When imports exceed exports, demand for foreign currency rises, putting downward pressure on the rupee.
- **Capital Outflows:** Foreign investors pulling money out of Indian markets reduce the supply of foreign currency, weakening the rupee.
- **Global Dollar Strength:** A strong US dollar, often due to high interest rates in the US, can lead to depreciation of emerging market currencies like the rupee.
- **Inflation Differentials:** Higher inflation in India compared to its trading partners can erode the rupee's purchasing power over time.
- **Geopolitical and Economic Uncertainty:** Global crises or domestic instability can reduce investor confidence, leading to currency depreciation.

### Reasons For Current Depreciation

- **Nominal Depreciation:** The rupee has weakened against most major currencies, including the **Chinese yuan (11.66 to 12.63)**. The NEER's fall below 85 reflects this broad-based depreciation.
- **Lower Domestic Inflation:** India's **CPI inflation in October 2025** stood at **0.25%**, far below that of major economies like US & Japan (3%); UK (3.6%); Euro Area (2.1%); Indonesia (2.9%); and Brazil (4.7%)

- The combination of **nominal depreciation** and **low inflation** has led to a **decline in REER**, implying that the **rupee is now undervalued** and Indian exports may gain price competitiveness.
- **Decline in NEER & REER:**
  - **NEER:** Dropped from **90.75 (Jan 2025)** to **84.58 (Oct 2025)** — a **6.8% decline** in just nine months.
  - **REER:** Fell sharply from its **record high of 108.06 (Nov 2024)** to **97.47 (Oct 2025)** — a **9.8% correction**, shifting the rupee from being **overvalued to undervalued**.



#### About NEER and REER

- Economists look beyond bilateral exchange rates to two indices — **Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER)** and **Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER)** to assess the rupee's real competitiveness.
  - **NEER:** Weighted average of the rupee's exchange rates against a **40-currency basket** (base year: 2015-16).
  - **REER:** NEER adjusted for **inflation differentials** between India and its trading partners.
- A fall in NEER or REER indicates a **weaker rupee**, while an increase shows appreciation.

#### Implications of a Weaker Rupee

- **Inflationary Pressures:** Imported goods, including electronics, fuel, and essential commodities, are becoming costlier, affecting household budgets.
  - Since India imports over 80% of its oil needs, fuel prices rise, triggering a domino effect on transportation, food, and manufacturing costs, thereby stoking inflation.
- **Corporate Profitability:** The rupee's depreciation is expected to erode India's corporate sector's (India Inc) profits, particularly for companies with high import dependencies or foreign currency borrowings.

- **Trade Balance and Export Competitiveness:** While a **weaker rupee** can **boost export competitiveness** by making Indian goods cheaper abroad, the benefit is **often offset by global demand slowdowns or supply chain disruptions**.
  - Moreover, India's structural trade deficit, driven by high-value imports like oil and electronics, limits the positive impact of currency depreciation.
- **Capital Flows and Investor Sentiment:** Currency volatility can deter foreign investors, especially in equity and debt markets.
  - Capital outflows driven by global risk aversion and higher US interest rates have exacerbated the rupee's decline.

#### IMF's Reclassification and RBI's Exchange Rate Policy

- **IMF**, in its **November 26, 2025** report, **reclassified India's exchange rate regime** as a '**crawl-like arrangement**', following its **earlier shift** from a '**floating**' to '**stabilised**' arrangement in **November 2023**.
  - A **crawl-like regime** allows gradual adjustments in the currency's value within a **2% band** around a defined trend, providing flexibility while avoiding abrupt movements.
- **RBI's Current Stance:** RBI has adopted a **more flexible approach**, intervening only occasionally to smooth excessive volatility. It is driven by:
  - **Easing inflation**, reducing the need for a strong rupee.
  - The need to **preserve export competitiveness**, particularly amid global trade tensions and shifting supply chains.
- RBI has **intervened in the forex market to stabilize the rupee**. It may impact:
  - **Foreign Exchange Reserves:** Continued intervention has led to a drawdown in forex reserves, limiting the RBI's ability to defend the rupee indefinitely.
  - **Inflation Risks:** A weaker rupee makes imports more expensive, potentially stoking inflation and complicating the RBI's monetary policy stance.

#### What Lies Ahead?

- The rupee's **REER** may **decline further**, keeping it undervalued if the trend of **gradual nominal depreciation** and **subdued inflation** continues.
  - Such a position could **benefit exporters** but may **raise import costs** over time if global inflation pressures resurface.



- The current undervaluation may offer temporary benefits to trade with India's inflation under control and external competitiveness improving.
  - ♦ However, sustaining stability will require careful balancing between **currency flexibility, inflation control, and capital flow management** in the months ahead.

Source: IE

## PRIVATE SECTOR ENTRY IN INDIA'S NUCLEAR SECTOR

### Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the government is moving towards opening up the nuclear sector for private players.

### About

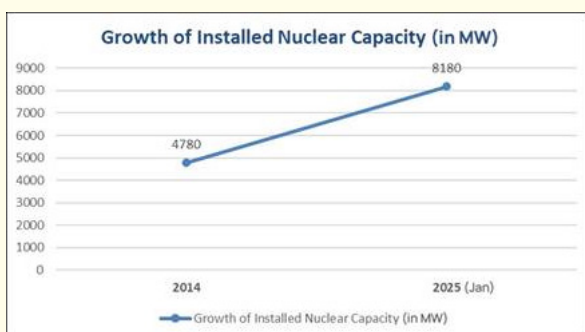
- Traditionally, nuclear power plants in India have been owned and operated only by state-owned **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL)** and its fully-owned subsidiary **Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam (BHAVINI)**.
- To allow private sector participation government has proposed amendments to key legislations;
  - ♦ **Atomic Energy Act, 1962**, a framework for nuclear energy development and regulation.
  - ♦ **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010**, ensuring compensation mechanisms for nuclear incidents.

### What is Nuclear Energy?

- Nuclear energy is the **energy released during nuclear reactions**, either through fission (splitting of atomic nuclei) or fusion (merging of atomic nuclei).
- **In nuclear fission**, heavy atomic nuclei, such as those of uranium or plutonium, are split into lighter nuclei, releasing a large amount of energy.
  - ♦ This process is utilized in nuclear power plants to generate electricity.

### Status of Nuclear power capacity in India

- The current installed nuclear power capacity in the country is **8,180 MW**, spread across **24 nuclear power reactors**.
- The government has set an ambitious target to increase the country's nuclear power capacity **to 100 GW by 2047**
- **Capacity Expansion:** 10 new reactors (totaling 8 GW) under construction across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh.
  - ♦ Approval for a 6x1208 MW nuclear plant in Andhra Pradesh in collaboration with the USA.



### Benefits of Private Sector Involvement

- **Faster Capacity Expansion:** Private investment will help bridge the financial gap needed for rapid nuclear power growth.
- **Technological Advancement:** Collaboration with private companies drive innovation and bring in global expertise.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Competitive bidding and private

participation will help reduce project costs and delays.

- **Energy Security:** Increased nuclear power generation helps India reduce dependence on fossil fuels and meet clean energy goals.

### Concerns to Private Sector Entry

- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Amendments to existing laws are required to enable private sector participation.

- **High Capital Requirement:** Nuclear power projects involve long gestation periods and large upfront investments, which deters private players.
- **Liability Concerns:** The Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act imposes high liability on operators, making private investment risky.
- **Safety and Security:** Nuclear energy requires strict safety protocols, and allowing private firms to operate reactors necessitates robust regulatory oversight.
- **Public Perception:** Concerns over nuclear safety, waste management, and radiation risks will face public resistance.

#### Government steps

- India had announced a **Rs 20,000 crore** R&D mission for development of **small modular reactors (SMRs)**.
  - ♦ India is also targeting the deployment of at least five of these indigenously developed reactors by 2033.
- **NPCIL and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)** have signed a supplementary Joint Venture (JV) agreement to develop nuclear power facilities in the country.
  - ♦ The JV named **ASHVINI** will build, own, and operate nuclear power plants, including the upcoming **4x700 MWe PHWR Mahi-Banswara Rajasthan Atomic Power Project**.

#### Way Ahead

- **Clear Regulatory Framework:** Establish a robust regulatory environment to ensure safety, compliance, and transparency, addressing concerns about accountability and national security.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Promote partnerships where the government maintains oversight, while private players handle operations, innovation, and investment, ensuring a balance of interests.
- **Gradual Implementation:** Start with pilot projects and small-scale initiatives to test private sector involvement, ensuring risk management before large-scale implementation.

Source: AIR

visibility to the lesser-known heritage sites around the Ellora Caves.

#### About

- Located in **Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Maharashtra**, the Ellora Caves are among India's first UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- The cave complex was carved between **600 CE and 1000 CE**, spanning the rule of the **Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, and Yadavas**.
- **Religious Pluralism:** The complex comprises **34 major caves**, 12 Buddhist, 17 Hindu, and 5 Jain, demonstrating a unique period of interreligious harmony and artistic exchange.

#### Key Architectural Features

- **Kailasa Temple (Cave 16):** It is carved from a **single monolithic basalt rock**, dedicated to the Hindu god Lord Shiva.
- Its design replicates Mount Kailash, the abode of Lord Shiva, and integrates complex **Dravida-style architecture**, multi-level mandapas, sculptural panels, and detailed narrative friezes.



- **Buddhist Caves:** These include monasteries (viharas) and prayer halls (chaityas).
  - ♦ **Cave 10, the Vishvakarma Cave**, features a vaulted ceiling and an intricately carved seated Buddha.
- **Jain Caves:** Built during the later phase of Ellora's development.
- Known for **delicate carvings, Tirthankara figures**, and themes of austerity and cosmic order.
- **Cave 32 (Indra Sabha)** is notable for its richly sculpted pillars and ceiling panels.

Source: TH

## NEWS IN SHORT

### ELLORA CAVES

#### Context

- Scottish historian William Dalrymple has urged the Maharashtra government to bring greater

### HORNBILL FESTIVAL

#### In News

- The 26th edition of Nagaland's famed Hornbill Festival, known as the "Festival of Festivals,"



began at the Naga Heritage Village in Kisama, Kohima, coinciding with the state's Statehood Day (December 1st).

### The Hornbill Festival

- It is held annually in the first week of December at Kisama near Kohima, and is a vibrant cultural showcase of all Naga tribes.
- It was conceived in 2000 to promote unity and preserve ethnic heritage.
- It highlights both traditional and contemporary Naga culture through music, crafts, cuisine, and folklore.
- Its venue, the Naga Heritage Village, was created to safeguard cultural traditions and boost tourism, and features seventeen indigenous Morungs (youth dormitories), each representing a distinct tribe.

### Importance

- The festival has transformed Nagaland's tourism landscape, offering visitors a unique opportunity to experience the diversity and distinctiveness of Naga life in one place.

Source :Air

## BAIKONUR COSMODROME

### In News

- A Soyuz-2.1a rocket damaged Baikonur's Site 31/6 by collapsing a service platform into the flame trench, leading to the suspension of crewed launches during the Soyuz MS-28 mission.
  - ♦ Baikonur has witnessed accidents, notably the 1960 Nedelin catastrophe.

### Baikonur cosmodrome

- It is a spaceport in **Kazakhstan** that Russia leases and operates as the site of its space launches.
- It was built in the **1950s** first as a missile test range before becoming the centre of the Soviet space programme.
- It contains launch complexes, assembly buildings, tracking stations, and housing.
- Its facilities can accommodate the Proton and Soyuz rockets and cargo ships intended for the International Space Station.

Source :TH

## SIM BINDING MANDATORY FOR ONLINE MESSAGING PLATFORMS

### Context

- **The Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has directed **online messaging platforms** to bar

users from accessing their services without the **SIM card used to register for the application.**

### About

- **The new norms mean** that apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Arattai, Snapchat, ShareChat and JioChat **must continuously verify** if the smartphones running them have the same SIM card active on them or not.
  - ♦ If the registered SIM is not found on the phones, **the apps must stop functioning.**
  - ♦ **For web versions of these apps**, the service must automatically log out users periodically, no later than every six hours.
- **This regulation aims to prevent cyber fraud and enhance security.**
- **It also warned that failure to comply** with the new norms will lead to action being taken under the Telecommunications Act, 2023, the Telecom Cyber Security Rules and other applicable laws.

Source: IE

## INDIA RE-ELECTED TO UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR 2025-29 TERM

### In News

- India has been re-elected to the UNESCO Executive Board for the 2025-29 term.

### The UNESCO Executive Board

- It is one of the three constitutional organs of the U.N. agency (the others being the General Conference and the Secretariat) and it is elected by the General Conference.
- It acts under the authority of the General Conference.
- It examines the programme of work for the organisation and corresponding budget estimates submitted to it by the Director-General.
- It consists of 58 Member States each with a four-year term of office.

### Functions

- It prepares the Conference agenda, reviews the programme of work and budget proposals, and submits recommendations.
- It advises on admitting new States outside the UN, the appointment of the Director-General, and oversees the execution of programmes by examining reports on organizational activities.

- It can convene extraordinary sessions of the General Conference and summon international or non-governmental conferences in education, sciences, humanities, and knowledge dissemination.

#### Importance for India

- India's re-election reflects the international community's confidence in longstanding commitment to multilateralism and to UNESCO's mandate across education, culture, science, communication and information.
- India's continued presence on the Executive Board underscores growing global support for its vision of inclusive, human-centric development and for strengthening cooperation among nations.

Source :Air

## CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY FORCE (CISF)

### Context

- **The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** has introduced a **revised posting policy** for personnel assigned to **Parliament security duties**.

### About

- **It has revised the tenure** of its personnel deployed at **Parliament** to a minimum of **four years** from the previous three years.
  - ♦ In 2024 CISF assumed charge of all core security layers at Parliament.
- The new policy includes **tighter eligibility norms and multi-stage screening**.
  - ♦ Personnel with a clean service record and only those who clear psychological assessment tests will be deployed.
- The updated system is **expected to ensure better familiarity with Parliament protocols** and **improve the overall efficiency** of security operations.

### Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

- It is a paramilitary force established in **1969**, under the **Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968**.
  - ♦ Every year, **CISF Raising Day** is observed on **March 10**.
- The force is led by a **Director General (DG)** and operates under the **Ministry of Home Affairs of India**.

### Roles:

- ♦ **Providing security to the strategic establishment**, including the Department of Space, the Department of Atomic Energy, the Airports, the Delhi Metro, the ports.
- ♦ **Also, the historical monuments** and the basic areas of the Indian economy such as petroleum and natural gas, electricity, coal, steel and mining.
- ♦ **It also provides counter-terrorism security** to various sensitive facilities, as well as private sector operations.
- ♦ **CISF also provides consultancy services to private industries** as well as other organisations within the Indian government.
- ♦ **It is also providing security to the protected persons** classified as Z Plus, Z, X, Y.

Source: TH

## HANSA-3 NG TRAINER AIRCRAFT

### Context

- The CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bengaluru, launched a "production version" of the indigenous Hansa-3(NG) trainer aircraft.

### About Hansa-3

- Hansa-3 is India's **indigenous two-seat trainer** aircraft developed by CSIR-NAL.
- Designed for basic flight training, it featured analogue instruments, mechanically operated flaps, and a standard cockpit, catering mainly to flying clubs and pilot training schools.
  - ♦ Being entirely constructed from **fiberglass and carbon composite materials**, it offers inherent advantages in **corrosion resistance, damage tolerance, and ease of repair**.
- **Hansa-3 NG (New Generation)** is an enhanced version of Hansa-3 with following key features;
  - ♦ **Digital Glass Cockpit:** Replaces analogue instruments for better situational awareness.
  - ♦ **Increased Fuel Capacity:** Enables longer training sorties and higher endurance.
  - ♦ **Stable Flight Handling:** Low stall speed and predictable behaviour make it ideal for ab-initio training.

Source: TH

## INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

### Context

- The 11th Governing Body Meeting of the **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)** concluded in Lima, Peru without consensus on expanding the list of crops covered under the **Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA)**.

### About

- India and several other countries opposed the proposal to extend the **Multilateral System (MLS)** to all crops and revise benefit-sharing rules, arguing it could dilute national sovereignty

over seed diversity.

- Under the SMTA, genetic material of **64 crops is accessible only to treaty members** and exclusively for research, breeding and training.
- Recipients cannot claim IPR over the material in its received form and must share benefits through the treaty's four benefit-sharing mechanisms.

### What is ITPGRFA?

- The ITPGRFA is a legally binding **FAO treaty, adopted in 2001** and enforced since 2004, aimed at conservation, sustainable use and fair benefit-sharing of **Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA)**.
- It complements the **CBD and Nagoya Protocol**.

Source: BS

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