NEXT IAS

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 26-12-2025

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DOWRY A CROSS-CULTURAL EVIL: SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT

Context

- The Supreme Court termed **dowry a cross-cultural social evil cutting across religions and communities.**

About SC Judgement

- **SC Observations:** Despite **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961,** the practice continues in disguised forms like **"gifts".**
  - Dowry violates constitutional values of justice, liberty and fraternity and directly **undermines Article 14** (equality before law).
  - Dowry treats women as a source of financial extraction, not equal partners in marriage.
- **SC Directions:** The court issued directions for **educational curriculum reforms** to reinforce spousal equality.
  - Ordered appointment of Dowry Prohibition Officers, sensitisation of police/judiciary, and speedy disposal of cases.
- The apex court requested the State High Courts to take stock, ascertain the number of pending dowry cases, and enable their expeditious disposal.

Dowry System

- **Dowry** refers to any valuable items**, such as cash, property, or jewellery,** given by the bride's family as a condition of marriage.
  - Though historically linked to strīdhana (voluntary gifts for a woman's security), it has evolved into a **coercive and exploitative social practice.**
- **Colonial Influence: In 1793, Lord Cornwallis's policies** privatised land ownership, which led to discouraging/diminishing women from owning property.
  - This led families to provide dowries as a means to secure their daughters' futures, which eventually became a requirement for marriage.

Dowry Cases in India

- **As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Data,** cases registered under dowry-related crimes saw a **14% increase in 2023,** with over 6,100 deaths reported through the year.
- **Uttar Pradesh** accounted for the highest number of cases under the Act followed by **Bihar and Karnataka.**

- **Uttar Pradesh** reported the most deaths, followed by Bihar.
- Thirteen States/Union Territories, including West Bengal, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh and Sikkim, reported zero dowry cases during the year.

Causes of the Dowry System in India

- **Patriarchal social structure** that treats women as dependents and values sons over daughters.
- **Gender inequality** in education, employment, and inheritance, making marriage the main source of security for women.
- **Social prestige and status pressure**, where dowry and lavish weddings become symbols of honour.
- **Commercialisation of marriage,** turning it into a financial transaction rather than a social institution.
- **Weak enforcement of laws** and social acceptance, leading to continued practice despite legal prohibition.

Concerns

- **Dowry reduces women to commodities,** undermining constitutional values of equality and justice.
- **Domestic violence and dowry deaths:** Harassment, cruelty, bride burning, and suicides linked to dowry demands remain serious concerns.
- **Gender imbalance:** Son preference reinforced by dowry contributes to female foeticide and a declining sex ratio.
- **Economic burden on families:** Heavy dowry demands push poor and middle-class families into debt and poverty.
- **Perpetuation of patriarchy:** Reinforces male dominance and women's subordinate status within marriage and society.
- **Undermining social development:** Normalises corruption, consumerism, and inequality, weakening ethical and social foundations.

Government Initiatives

- **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:** Dowry is illegal under the Act, which penalizes giving, taking, or demanding dowry.
  - Harassment related to dowry is also punishable under laws like the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act.

- ◆ If a woman dies under unnatural circumstances within seven years of marriage due to dowry harassment, it is considered dowry death, with severe legal consequences.
  - ◆ Authorities such as Dowry Prohibition Officers, police, and NGOs handle complaints, and awareness programs aim to discourage dowry practices.
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:** Section 3 defines it as any act that harms a woman's physical or mental health or endangers her safety, including harassment for unlawful demands.
- **24x7 Women Helpline (181):** Women Helpline 181 provides 24/7 emergency and support services for women facing violence in both public and private spaces.
- **One Stop Centres (OSCs):** These centres offer medical assistance, legal aid, psychological counselling, and temporary shelter, all under one roof.
- **Women Help Desks (WHDs) in Police Stations:** WHDs are established in police stations to make law enforcement more accessible and responsive to women's issues.
  - ◆ 14,658 Women Help Desks (WHDs) have been set up, of which 13,743 are headed by women police officers.

Way Ahead

- **Eradicating dowry requires simultaneous intervention across multiple domains:** strengthening women's economic independence, reforming inheritance laws to ensure genuine property rights, implementing compulsory school enrollment and vocational training for girls.
- The Government of India has taken significant steps to enhance women's safety and security through legal measures, financial allocations, and support services.

Source: TH

GOOD GOVERNANCE DAY

Context

- Good Governance Day is observed on **25th December** every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

About Good Governance Day

- **According to the United Nations,** Good governance is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.
- **In 2014**, the government announced that December 25 would be celebrated as Good Governance Day.

Good Governance Index

- The Good Governance Index (GGI) is a **diagnostic tool** introduced by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG),** on **December 25, 2019** to evaluate governance performance across states and union territories and encourage improvements.
- The Index identifies **10 key sectors** and assesses governance performance through **58 citizen-centric indicators.**

Government initiatives for Good Governance

- **Government e Marketplace (GeM):** Facilitates online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments/ Organizations/ PSUs. GeM aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.
- **UMANG App:** Developed by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** and National eGovernance Division, the UMANG App

serves as a single platform to access PAN India services of the Government.

◆ It brings together major government services on a single mobile app so as to enable the accessibility of government services on mobile phones of citizens.

- **Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS):** A 24×7 online platform for time-bound redressal and monitoring of public grievances through dashboards, enhancing transparency and accountability in service delivery.

- **e-HRMS 2.0 Mobile Application:** The e-HRMS 2.0 app, available on Android and iOS, was launched to provide government employees seamless access to human resource services.

Challenges to Good Governance

- **Ineffective implementation of laws:** Hasty and ineffective implementation of laws and policies has led to hardship for the common man and even led to a lack of trust in the government in being responsible.

- **Corruption:** It persists due to opaque administrative structures, weak legal frameworks, limited access to information and poor understanding of individual rights.

- **Criminalisation of Politics:** When individuals with criminal backgrounds become lawmakers, they prioritize personal interests over public welfare, leading to inefficient administration, and breakdown of public trust.

- **Low Awareness of Rights and Duties:** Limited civic awareness prevents citizens from asserting their rights and fulfilling their duties, leading to misuse of freedoms, weak participation and ineffective governance.

Way Ahead

- Governance reforms must focus on making grievance redressal and service delivery systems more responsive by fully **leveraging digital platforms, real-time monitoring and data-based decision-making** across all levels of administration.

- Parallel efforts are required to strengthen institutional capacity, **promote citizen awareness and scale up proven best practices** so that improvements in governance translate into consistent, on-ground outcomes.

About Atal Bihari Vajpayee

- He was born on **December 25, 1924**, in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

- **Early involvement in politics:** Joined the **Quit India Movement** in 1942 during his student days.

- **Prime Ministerial terms:** Served three times as India's Prime Minister — briefly in 1996, for 13 months in 1998-1999, and full-time from 1999 to 2004.

  ◆ He became the first non-Congress leader to complete a full term as Prime Minister.

- **Nuclear achievement:** Oversaw India's declaration as a full-fledged nuclear state.

- First Indian leader to address the UN General Assembly in Hindi.

- **Awards:** He received the **Padma Vibhushan in 1992** for his selfless dedication to the nation and was conferred with **Bharat Ratna** in **2015.**

Source: PIB

100 YEARS OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (CPI)

In News

- The Communist Party of India completed 100 years, marking a significant chapter in India's history.

European Background of Communism

- Europe was divided between monarchists (Right) and republicans (Left), giving rise to the Right–Left political binary after the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars.

  ◆ Industrial capitalism created wealth but also deep social inequalities.

- **Karl Marx and Communist Ideology:** Karl Marx envisioned a transition from capitalism to socialism due to capitalism's internal contradictions.

  ◆ He expected socialist revolutions to begin in advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe.

Russian Revolution and Global Impact

- Contrary to Marx's expectation, the first successful socialist revolution occurred in Russia in 1917.

- The Bolshevik Revolution opposed monarchy, capitalism, and imperialism.

- It inspired anti-imperialist movements and Communist parties across non-European, colonised countries, including India.

Impact on Indian Communism

- The Indian Communist movement drew strong inspiration from the Russian Revolution and Lenin.
- **Three Political Strands Leading to CPI Formation**
    - **Diasporic Revolutionaries** Led by M. N. Roy and others active in the US, Mexico, Europe, USSR, Kabul and Berlin; connected to the Communist International (Comintern).
    - **Indian Left Groups**: Local Communist groups in Lahore, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, seeking coordination within India.
    - **Growth of labour organisations**, especially the formation of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1920.

Tashkent Meeting (1920)

- Indian revolutionaries, with Comintern approval, formed a Communist Party in Tashkent.
- It is aimed at overthrowing British imperialism and establishing socialism.
- It lacked links with Indian-based revolutionary groups and mass support inside India.

Kanpur Conference (1925)

- Indian Communist groups held a national conference in Kanpur and resolved to formally establish the Communist Party of India (CPI).
- It declared goals of ending British rule and creating a workers' and peasants' republic.
- It occurred in a politically symbolic location due to labour presence and earlier Bolshevik conspiracy cases.

Debate on CPI's Foundation

- CPI (Marxist) recognises Tashkent (1920) as the founding moment due to Comintern approval.
- **CPI considers Kanpur (1925)** as the true foundation, emphasising Indian initiative and mass politics.
    - Tashkent represents the "Communist" aspect; Kanpur represents the "Indian" aspect of Indian Communism.

Role in Anti-Imperialist Struggle

- Communists actively participated in India's freedom struggle, except during 1942–45 when anti-fascist war efforts took priority.

- They faced repression through conspiracy cases, bans and imprisonment.

Relations with the Congress

- Communists debated whether to transform the Congress from within or build an independent political alternative.
- This dilemma persisted throughout the freedom movement.
- Mass Movements and United Fronts Led workers' and peasants' struggles and formed Workers' and Peasants' Parties.
- It allied with the Congress Socialist Party in the 1930s, though the alliance collapsed by 1939.

Post-1945 and Peasant Struggles

- It led major peasant movements like Tebhaga (Bengal) and Telangana (Hyderabad).
- It supported popular resistance against colonial rule.
- Communist movement split between armed revolutionary paths and parliamentary democracy.
- It achieved electoral success in states like Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura.

Criticism and Continuing Relevance

- Communism has faced criticism for authoritarianism, corruption and declining relevance.
- Despite limitations, it continues to stand for the disadvantaged in a world marked by deep global inequalities.

Source :IE

INDIA'S CREATOR ECONOMY SET TO DRIVE OVER $1 TRILLION IN CONSUMER SPENDING BY 2030: REPORT

Context

- As per Boston Consulting Group (BCG) report, India's rapidly expanding **creator economy** is projected to **influence** over **one trillion dollars** in annual consumer spending by **2030**.

Key Highlights

- **India** currently has around **2 to 2.5 million** monetised digital creators who influence more than **30% of consumer purchase decisions.**
- At present, **creator-led influence** already shapes an estimated **350 to 400 billion dollars in annual**

consumer spending, a figure expected to grow sharply over the **next five years.**

- Creator-influenced spending **is estimated to reach $1Tn+ by 2030,** unlocking **$100Bn+ in ecosystem revenues.**
- **Creator-led commerce** has become **central** to how Indian **consumers discover, assess and buy products.**
  - This shift spans categories ranging from **fashion and beauty to electronics and daily-use essentials.**
  - The trend highlights a **move away from traditional top-down** advertising towards trust-based, community-driven product discovery.
- As per the report, the companies that embed creators and digital commerce platforms into their core marketing, sales and pricing strategies **will be best placed to tap into India's next phase of digital-led growth.**

Creators Economy

- The **creator economy** refers to the **ecosystem** where individuals (content creators) **use digital platforms** to create, distribute, and monetise content, skills, or influence directly to audiences often without **traditional intermediaries.**
- **Key Components of a Creators Economy:**
  - **Creators:** YouTubers, podcasters, bloggers, influencers, educators, gamers, artists.
  - **Platforms:** YouTube, Instagram, X etc.
  - **Monetisation Tools:** Ads, brand sponsorships, subscriptions, tips, NFTs, merchandise.
  - **Audiences/Communities:** Followers, subscribers, niche communities.
  - **Enablers:** Payment gateways, analytics tools, AI tools, creator management agencies.

Significance of the Creators Economy

- **Employment Generation & Self-Employment:** Creates large-scale self-employment opportunities, especially for youth, women, and gig workers, reducing dependence on traditional jobs.
- **Democratisation of Entrepreneurship:** Low entry barriers allow individuals with skills or creativity—not capital—to become micro-entrepreneurs and earn directly from audiences.
- **Boost to Digital Economy:** Drives growth in allied sectors such as fintech, digital payments, cloud services, AI tools, marketing, and e-commerce.

- **Cultural Representation & Soft Power:** Promotes regional languages, local art forms, and indigenous knowledge, strengthening India's cultural diplomacy globally.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Enables participation from Tier-2, Tier-3 cities and rural areas, helping bridge regional and gender income gaps.

Source: LM

CELEBRATING 25TH ANNIVERSARY: PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

In News

- The 25th anniversary of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was observed recently.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

- It was Launched in 2000 to provide all-weather road connectivity to eligible, previously unconnected rural habitations.
- It established the foundation for universal rural access by linking villages with markets, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities.
- It has emerged as a key enabler of agricultural growth, employment generation, improved access to education and health services, and poverty alleviation.

Objectives

- It aims to ensure all-weather access to habitations with population thresholds
- It aims to facilitate access to schools, healthcare, and markets.
- It aims to spur rural job creation through construction and maintenance.
- It aims to reduce isolation and improve income opportunities.

Phases

- **Phase I:** Road connectivity projects for a total of 1,63,339 rural habitations have been sanctioned nationwide.
- **Phase - II (2013):** Introduced in 2013 and focused on strengthening and consolidating the existing rural road network.
  - It prioritized the upgradation of economically important routes linking rural markets, growth centers, and service hubs, with the objective

of improving transportation efficiency and accelerating rural economic development.

- ◆ Launched in 2016, the road connectivity project for Left Wing Extremism Affected Area (RCPLWEA) is a targeted intervention for infrastructure development covering 44 most severely affected Left Wing Extremism (LWE) districts and adjoining areas across nine States- Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.

- **Phase III- (2019**) focuses on upgrading 1,25,000 km of Through Routes and Major Rural Links to strengthen connectivity between rural habitations and key socio-economic institutions, including Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs), higher secondary schools, and healthcare facilities.

- **Phase – IV (2024):** Phase IV of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) aims to provide all-weather road connectivity to 25,000 unconnected rural habitations, based on Census 2011 population criteria

Steps

- The government has strengthened rural road development under PMGSY through the extensive use of advanced technologies, digital platforms, and robust quality standards to ensure durability, transparency, and sustainability.

- Real-time monitoring of physical and financial progress is carried out through the **Online Management, Monitoring, and Accounting System (OMMAS),** which integrates project management, geo-tagged quality inspections, and independent assessments by State and National Quality Monitors.

- Road maintenance is systematically tracked through the **e-MARG platform**, linking contractor payments during the defect liability period to actual road performance and quality outcomes.

- Transparency has further improved with the **mandatory use of GPS-enabled vehicle tracking systems** to monitor machinery deployment in PMGSY-III works.

Achievements

- PMGSY has evolved into a key driver of socio-economic transformation, strengthening market integration, facilitating better price realization for farmers, and supporting both farm and non-farm livelihoods.

- The programme has greatly improved rural connectivity, market access, education, healthcare, and inclusive economic growth.

- It is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and goes beyond infrastructure to promote transparency, sustainability, poverty reduction, and comprehensive rural transformation.

Challenges

- Ensuring long-term upkeep of roads amid budget constraints.

- Roads vulnerable to floods, landslides, and extreme weather events.

- Remote tribal, desert, and hilly regions still face connectivity deficits.

- Rising costs of construction materials and land acquisition.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- As PMGSY completes 25 years in 2025, it stands as a cornerstone of India's rural development, with nearly 95% of sanctioned rural roads completed.

- The next phase must prioritize sustainability, climate adaptation, and inclusive coverage to ensure that rural connectivity continues to drive India's development narrative.

- Strengthening maintenance, leveraging technology, and focusing on underserved regions will be key to making PMGSY future-ready.

Source :PIB

INDIA'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Context

- India's manufacturing sector has long underperformed relative to its potential, constrained by structural inefficiencies, policy missteps, and a premature leap into services despite several policy pushes.

Background: India's Manufacturing Sector

- It has evolved from a modest post-independence base to a strategic pillar of economic growth.

  - ◆ India adopted a **mixed economy model** with a strong emphasis on public sector-led industrialization post-independence.

- The **Second Five-Year Plan (1956–61)** laid the foundation for heavy industries, steel plants, and public enterprises.

- It contributed around 15–17% to GDP by the 1990s.
- India's manufacturing sector has lagged behind despite starting from similar economic positions as **China and South Korea** in the early 20th century.

Current Status

- Manufacturing's contribution to India's GDP has broadly hovered in the mid-teens (around 13–17 percent in recent decades), compared to roughly **25–29 percent in China, around 27 percent in South Korea, and about 24–25 percent in Vietnam**.
- On employment, over 45 percent of India's workforce is still in agriculture, while only about 11.4 percent is employed in manufacturing and roughly 29 percent in services.
- A large share of manufacturing employment is informal, which constrains formal training, technology absorption, quality upgradation and stable industrial relations.

Why Manufacturing Has Lagged in India?

- **Low Productivity and Fragmented Industry:** Most Indian manufacturers are **small-scale** units with limited automation and poor economies of scale.
  - According to CMIE data, the average productivity per worker in Indian manufacturing is **less than 20% of China**.
- **Infrastructural Deficiencies:** Persistent issues in **logistics, power reliability, and port connectivity**, which increase costs by 14–18% of product value (compared to 8% in East Asia).
  - Even after schemes like PM Gati Shakti, **execution delays** remain a major barrier.
- **Policy Instability and Regulatory Complexity:** India's **frequent policy reversals**, overlapping compliance from Centre and States, and especially around import tariffs and Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) guidelines.
- **Weak Domestic Supply Chains:** India imports a large share of intermediate goods stifling the growth of indigenous supply chains.
- **Skill Gaps:** Only about **5% of India's workforce is formally skilled**, compared to **24% in China** and **52% in the USA.**

- Vocational programs like *Skill India* have limited industry linkage, leading to skill demand mismatches.
- **Land and Labour Market Rigidities:** Land acquisition remains costly and time-consuming.
  - Setting up an industrial plant can take **3–5 years**, versus 18 months in Vietnam.
  - Labour laws still cause hesitation for large-scale manufacturing employment.
- **Weak R&D and Innovation Culture:** Manufacturing R&D in India is less than **0.7% of GDP**, versus **2.1% in China**.
  - Indian firms often 'assemble' rather than 'innovate', relying heavily on foreign designs.
- **Domestic Demand Constraints: Income inequality limits domestic demand** for manufactured goods beyond basic products.
  - The consumption base for durable goods is still narrow.
- **Policy Bias Toward Services:** Government incentives, education, and infrastructure have historically favored IT and services over manufacturing.
  - As a result, India **'skipped industrialization', jumping from agriculture to services.**

Does India Resemble Dutch Disease?

- **Dutch Disease** describes how the boom of one sector (often resource-based) crowds out others, particularly **tradable sectors** like manufacturing, through two main channels:
  - **Wage Effect:** Labour is pulled towards the booming sector, raising overall wages.
  - **Exchange Rate Effect:** Increased exports appreciate the real exchange rate, making other exports less competitive.
- In India, **high government salaries** in the public sector **acted as the 'booming sector',** drawing **labour away from manufacturing** and driving up wages across the economy. It had three major consequences:
  - **Manufacturing lost competitiveness** because firms couldn't match government pay scales.
  - **Domestic prices rose**, making imports cheaper and domestic goods relatively expensive.

- ◆ **Real exchange rate appreciation** occurred, even without a change in nominal currency value, further hurting exports.
- In essence, India experienced a policy-induced Dutch disease, where the expansion of a high-wage public sector distorted incentives against industrial growth.

Policy Reforms Fueling Growth

- **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes:** Targeting 14 key sectors, including electronics, automotive, and pharmaceuticals, the PLI schemes aim to boost domestic production, attract FDI, and create jobs.
- **PM MITRA Parks:** These integrated textile parks are designed to enhance scale and efficiency in the textile value chain, promoting exports and employment.
- **National Manufacturing Mission:** It was announced in the Union Budget 2025–26, as a long-term strategic roadmap that integrates policy, execution, and governance into a single, unified vision.
  - ◆ It prioritizes **clean-tech manufacturing** from solar PV modules and EV batteries to green hydrogen and wind turbines ensuring India's rise in global supply chains aligns with its **net-zero 2070 commitment.**

FIVE FOCAL AREAS OF NATIONAL MANUFACTURING MISSION

A Vibrant and Dynamic MSME sector

Ease & Cost of Doing Buisness

Availability of Technology

Future Ready Workforce for in–demand jobs

Quality Products

Source: Ministry of Finance

Building Industrial Ecosystems

- **Skill India Mission:** Trains youth in industry-relevant skills, with a focus on Industry 4.0 technologies like AI, robotics, and additive manufacturing.
- **Gati Shakti Master Plan:** Integrates transport and logistics infrastructure to reduce costs and improve supply chain efficiency.

- **Digital India and Startup India:** Encourage innovation and MSME participation in advanced manufacturing.
  - ◆ These efforts aim to create industrial clusters that mirror the success of hubs like Tamil Nadu (automobiles), Gujarat (chemicals), and Karnataka (electronics).

Way Forward: Toward Global Manufacturing Leadership

- India's vision is to become a global manufacturing hub by 2047. The NITI Aayog's Roadmap to Global Leadership in Advanced Manufacturing outlines key strategies:
  - ◆ **Digital Transformation:** Embracing Industry 4.0 technologies like AI, IoT, and robotics to modernize production.
  - ◆ **Green Manufacturing:** Integrating sustainability and circular economy principles to reduce environmental impact.
  - ◆ **Cluster Development:** Building industrial ecosystems in states like Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Maharashtra to foster innovation and scale.
  - ◆ **R&D Investment:** Increasing public-private collaboration in research to drive product innovation and quality.
- The goal is to raise manufacturing's share in GDP to 25% and generate 100 million jobs **(National Manufacturing Policy),** positioning India as a resilient and inclusive industrial economy.

Source: TH

═══ NEWS IN SHORT ═══

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA RELEASED IN SANTHALI LANGUAGE

Context

- President Droupadi Murmu released the **Constitution of India in the Santhali language.**

About

- The Constitution of India is now available in the **Santhali language, written in the Ol Chiki script.**
- The Santhali language was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution through the **92nd Amendment Act, 2003**.

- It is spoken by a significant number of tribal people i**n Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal and Bihar.**

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.
    - **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 Santhali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.
- **English is absent** from the list of 22 languages in the Eighth Schedule. It is one of the 99 non-scheduled languages of India.

Source: TH

DHANU YATRA

In News

- Recently, 'Dhanu Yatra' was inaugurated at Bargarh in Odisha.

Dhanu Yatra

- It is the largest open-air theatre in the world and It attracts thousands of visitors from across Odisha and beyond.
- It is the eleven-day annual cultural spectacle that brings mythology, tradition and performance together in a unique celebration .
- It transforms the entire town into the mythical city of Mathura and dramatizes episodes from Lord Krishna's life, from his birth to the death of King Kansa.
- The Central Government has accorded **National Festival status** to 'Dhanu Yatra'.

Source: Air

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE GRID (NATGRID) LINKED TO THE NATIONAL POPULATION REGISTER (NPR)

Context

- The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID), has been linked to the National Population Register (NPR), aimed at strengthening intelligence gathering and expediting criminal investigations.

What is the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)?

- NATGRID is a **real-time intelligence and data-access platform** developed after the **26/11 Mumbai attacks (2008)** to enable seamless information-sharing across agencies.
- It functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** and consolidates over **20 categories** of civil and commercial data, such as bank transactions, telecom usage, passport/immigration records, tax IDs, police FIRs (CCTNS), and other e-governance sources.
- **Data accessibility:** Initially restricted to;
    - Intelligence Bureau (IB), the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), and the National Investigation Agency (NIA),
    - The Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) etc.
- Access to NATGRID is now available to **Superintendent of Police (SP)** rank officers.

Gandiva: The Analytical Backbone of NATGRID

- Gandiva' is an **upgraded analytical tool** deployed on the NATGRID platform.
- It supports multi-source data collection, f**acial recognition, and entity resolution.**
    - If an image of a suspect is available, Gandiva can match it with Telecom KYC databases, Driving licences, Vehicle registration records and Other photo identity documents.

Significance of Linking NATGRID with NPR

- The integration allows agencies to **access verified family-linked demographic information of suspects** or persons of interest.
    - Access to NPR data through Gandiva allows **retrieval of details** of all family members linked to a suspect, if available.
- Family linkage enables network analysis, helping investigators identify associates, safe houses, and movement patterns.

National Population Register (NPR)

- NPR is a comprehensive database of usual residents of India, maintained on a family-wise basis.
- First collected in 2010 and updated in 2015 through door-to-door enumeration, it has a database of **119 crore residents.**
- NPR is the first step to the creation of the **National Register of Citizens (NRC),** as per the Citizenship Act.

Source: TH

RABIES

Context

- India accounts for about one-third of the world's 59,000 annual rabies deaths, nearly 20,000 cases, the highest for any country.

About

- Rabies is a serious public health problem in **over 150 countries and territories, mainly in Asia and Africa.**
- It is a **viral, zoonotic, neglected tropical disease** affecting the central nervous system.
- **Caused by the Rabies virus** (genus Lyssavirus, family Rhabdoviridae).
- **Transmission:** In up to 99% of the human rabies cases, dogs are responsible for virus transmission.
  - Rabies spreads to people and animals via saliva, usually through bites, scratches, or direct contact with mucosa (e.g. eyes, mouth, or open wounds).
- **Fatality:** Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal.
- There is no cure after symptom onset.
- In India, the National Action Plan for Dog-Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) aims for zero human deaths by 2030.

Source: TH

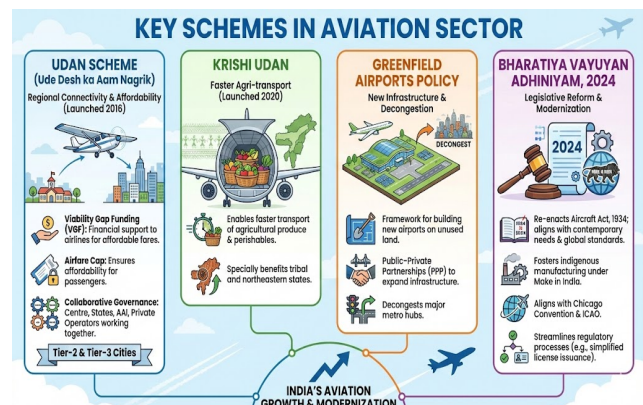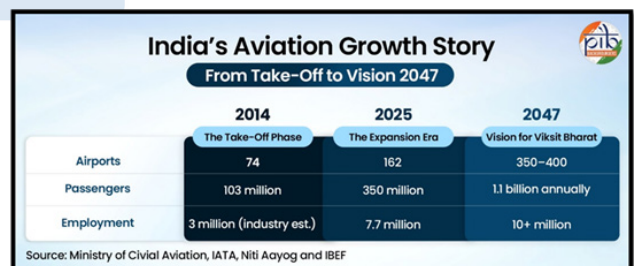## NEW ENTRANTS IN INDIA'S DOMESTIC AVIATION MARKET

Context

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has granted **No Objection Certificates (NOCs)** to **two** new airlines, **AI Hind Air and FlyExpress**, clearing the way for their launch next year.
  - In **2026**, apart from these two carriers, **Uttar Pradesh-based Shankh Air,** which already has a **No Objection Certificate (NOC),** is likely to start operations.

India's Aviation Industry Scenario

- **India** has emerged as the **world's third-largest** domestic aviation market.
- India currently has **nine scheduled domestic airlines** in operation.
- **IndiGo and the Air India Group** (Air India and Air India Express) together account for over **90 per cent** of the domestic market.
- IndiGo alone holds more than **65 percent market share**, intensifying concerns over a de facto duopoly.
- **Other scheduled carriers** include Akasa Air, SpiceJet, Star Air, Fly91, and IndiaOne Air.
- **Systemic Concerns:** The dominance of IndiGo was highlighted when about **4,500** flights were cancelled recently.
  - It has intensified concerns over systemic risks and limited resilience arising from heavy dependence on a single carrier in India's domestic aviation market.

India's Aviation Growth Story — From Take-Off to Vision 2047

	2014 The Take-Off Phase	2025 The Expansion Era	2047 Vision for Viksit Bharat
Airports	74	162	350–400
Passengers	103 million	350 million	1.1 billion annually
Employment	3 million (industry est.)	7.7 million	10+ million

Source: Ministry of Civial Aviation, IATA, Niti Aayog and IBEF

KEY SCHEMES IN AVIATION SECTOR

Source: TH

'SAMUDRA PRATAP'

In News

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) inducted the first in-built Pollution Control Vessel (PCV), SAMUDRA PRATAP (Yard 1267) under the 02 PCV project of Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).

'Samudra Pratap'

- It is the first indigenously designed and built Pollution Control Vessel of the Indian Coast Guard.

- It is the largest ship in the ICG fleet, significantly enhancing the Coast Guard's operational reach and capability.

- It is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including a 30mm CRN-91 gun, two 12.7mm stabilised remote-controlled guns with integrated fire control systems, an indigenously developed Integrated Bridge System, Integrated Platform Management System, Automated Power Management System, and a high-capacity external firefighting system.

- With over 60% indigenous content, the induction of this ship reinforces the vision of Government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.

Source :PIB