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Table of Content

MHA UNVEILS 'PRAHAAR', INDIA'S FIRST NATIONAL COUNTER-TERROR POLICY

Context

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) unveiled **India's inaugural National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy, titled 'PRAHAAR'.**

About

- It is this principled approach which **informs the Indian policy of 'zero tolerance' against terrorism.**

- **The counter-terrorism strategy of India, 'PRAHAAR', flows from these ideals:**
  - **Prevention** of terror attacks to protect Indian citizens and interests;
  - **Responses,** which are swift and proportionate to the threat posed;
  - **Aggregating internal capacities** for achieving synergy in a whole-of-government approach;
  - **Human rights and 'Rule of Law'** based processes for mitigation of threats;
  - **Attenuating the conditions** enabling terrorism, including radicalization;
  - **Aligning and shaping** the international efforts to counter terrorism;
  - **Recovery and resilience** through a whole-of-society approach.

Need for such Policy

- **Target of Terror Groups:** India has been the target of **global terrorist groups** such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

- **Use of Technology:** Handlers from across the border frequently use the latest technologies, including use of drones, for facilitating terror-related activities and attacks in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

- **Use of Social Media:** For propaganda, communication, funding and guiding terror attacks, these terror groups use social media platforms as well as 'instant messaging applications'.
  - Technological advancements like encryption, dark web, crypto wallets etc. have allowed these groups to operate anonymously.

- **Threat to access CBRNED:** Disrupting terrorist efforts to access and use **CBRNED (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, Digital) material** remains a challenge for Counter Terrorism (CT) agencies.

Major Highlights of the Policy

- **Prevention:** India follows a pro-active 'Intelligence-Guided' approach, in which primacy is accorded to intelligence gathering and its dissemination to executive agencies.
  - Operationalization of Multi Agency Centre (MAC) along with the Joint Task Force on Intelligence (JTFI) in the Intelligence Bureau (IB) remain the nodal platform for efficient and real time sharing.

- **Response:** The local Police is the first responder to any attack, assisted by specialized State and Central anti-terror Forces.
  - The vulnerable states have created special CT Forces to respond to attacks.
  - **The National Security Guard (NSG)** is the nodal national Counter-Terror Force under MHA, for assistance to State Forces in responding to major terror attacks.
  - **The National Investigation Agency (NIA) and State Police Agencies** conduct CT investigations in India and high prosecution rates of these investigations ensure a deterrent to future terror incidents.

- **Aggregating Capacities:** There is regular acquisition of latest tools, technology and weaponry, besides training for new skills and tactics for CT Agencies.
  - Efforts have been made to further modernize the training modules and infrastructure of the training institutes.

- **Human Rights and Rule of Law Based Processes**: India adheres to the 'Rule of Law', where laws are just, applied evenly and protect fundamental rights.
  - India is also a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, besides ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

- **Attenuating the conditions conducive to Terrorism:** Terrorist groups are continuously making efforts to recruit Indian youth.
  - Once identified, these youths undergo a graded police response, aimed at comprehensively addressing the problem of radicalization and violent extremism.
  - Legal action is initiated against the individual based on their level of radicalization.

- **Aligning and Shaping the International Efforts:** India has entered into various agreements like Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), Extradition Treaty/Extradition Arrangement (ET/EA), Joint Working Group (JWG) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with foreign partners for information sharing and other legal cooperation.

- **Recovery and Resilience through a whole-of-society approach:** Public-private partnership has been a key component helping in faster recovery and resilience in case of a terror attack.

  - The government engages a team of doctors, psychologists, lawyers and other members of civil society, including NGOs, religious and community leaders, to sensitize and reintegrate the affected community.

Way Forward

- The coordinated multi-agency actions have greatly contributed towards **success in Indian counter terrorism efforts.**

  - However, there remains a **scope for further cooperation and collaboration among various agencies** for intelligence collection and investigation.

- National actions, coupled with international and regional cooperation, are key elements in addressing trans-national terrorism challenges.

- 'Prahaar', aims to **criminalize all terrorist acts** and deny access to funds, weapons and safe havens to the terrorists, their financiers and supporters.

Source: TH

INDIA SEEKS TO JOIN IEA

Context

- **The International Energy Agency (IEA)** welcomed the progress being made on **India's request** for **full membership of the organisation.**

The International Energy Agency (IEA)

- **Established:** In 1974.

- **The IEA's founding members were** Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and the United States.

- **Reason:** It was created when major oil-exporting countries drastically reduced oil supplies, causing severe economic disruptions in industrialized nations.

- **Mandate:** IEA's original mandate was to ensure that oil supplies were kept stable, and potential disruptions in future were anticipated and prevented through timely action.

  - It also developed an elaborate mechanism to deal with oil emergencies in future, making it mandatory for every member country to maintain certain minimum strategic stocks of oil.

- **Members:** The membership was kept open only for OECD countries.

  - There are now 33 full members with Colombia being inducted as 33rd members recently.

- **Associate Members:** In 2015, IEA opened the doors for non-OECD countries to become associate members.

  - The associate members participate in the policy discussions and activities, but do not have decision-making rights.

  - India became an associate member in 2017. There are 13 associate members right now.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD)

- The OECD is an intergovernmental organisation that promotes economic development, policy coordination, and global cooperation.

- **Motto:** "Better Policies for Better Lives."

- Established in **1961**, succeeding the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC).

- **Headquarters:** Paris, France.

- **Membership:** 38 member countries (mainly developed economies). India is not a member.

Shift in the Role of IEA

- **Expansion Beyond Oil Security:** It has moved from a narrow focus on oil supply security to covering all major energy sources including gas, coal, nuclear and renewables.

- **Climate Change and Energy Transition:** Decarbonisation, net-zero pathways and clean energy transitions have become central to its mandate.

- **Critical Minerals Focus:** The IEA has launched a Critical Minerals Programme to address supply chain risks linked to renewable energy and electric mobility.

- **Rise of Emerging Economies:** The global energy landscape has shifted with emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil becoming major energy producers and consumers.

- **Broader Global Representation:** While IEA members once accounted for over 60% of global energy demand, their share declined to about 40% before expanding through associate members, and the broader IEA now represents nearly 80% of global energy demand.

India's quest for membership

- **India's Bid for Full Membership:** India formally submitted its request for full membership to the IEA in 2023 and has been actively pursuing this objective in recent years.

- **Desire for Decision-Making Role:** India seeks full membership primarily to participate in the IEA's decision-making processes, as the agency has become increasingly influential in shaping global energy policies, energy transition pathways, and climate-related strategies.

- **IEA as a Knowledge and Policy Platform:** The IEA has evolved into a key global knowledge platform on clean energy technologies, energy transitions and climate change, and it maintains one of the most reliable and comprehensive global energy databases.

Way Ahead

- Granting India full membership would require **amendments to the IEA's founding framework,** since membership has so far been limited to members of the OECD.

  - India has shown no inclination to seek OECD membership, making changes to eligibility criteria or a legal amendment necessary.

- The IEA has strongly supported India's bid, recognising it as the world's most populous country and a future driver of global energy demand growth.

- IEA's engagement with India has also increased significantly in recent years, engagement has deepened through India-focused reports.

Source: IE

CONCERNS REGARDING INDEPENDENCE OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION

Context

- Recent controversies surrounding electoral rolls, appointment procedures, and institutional autonomy have raised concerns about the functioning of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Concerns Regarding Election Commission

- **Electoral Roll Manipulation:** Concerns have been raised regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists.

  - Reports of deletion of large numbers of voters, particularly from certain regions, have sparked fears of disenfranchisement.

- **Controversy Over Appointment Process:** The Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Office and Terms of Office) Act, 2023 altered the selection mechanism.

  - It is argued that exclusion of the judiciary from the selection committee may increase executive influence. This issue has been challenged in court and remains a matter of constitutional debate.

Article 324 of Constitution

- Article 324 of the Constitution states that the Election Commission will comprise the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and such number of Election Commissioners (ECs), as the President may decide.

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) is responsible for managing the preparation of electoral rolls and conducting elections to **Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice-President.**

- The Constitution specifies that the President will appoint the CEC and ECs, subject to the provisions of an Act of Parliament.

Key Features of the CEs and ECs Appointment Act, 2023

- It replaces the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991.

- **Election Commission:** The Election Commission will consist of a Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (ECs). The President will periodically fix the number of ECs.

- **Appointment of the Commission:** The Commission will be appointed by the President, upon the recommendation of the Selection Committee.

  - **The Selection Committee** will comprise the Prime Minister, Cabinet Minister, and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha (or leader of the single largest opposition party).

  - **A Search Committee** headed by the Cabinet Secretary will suggest five names to the Selection Committee.

  - The Selection Committee may consider any person other than those suggested by the Search Committee.

- **Term and reappointment:** Members of the Election Commission will hold office for six years, or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

  - Members of the Commission cannot be re-appointed.

  - If an EC is appointed as a CEC, the overall period of the term may not be more than six years.

- **Salary and pension:** The salary, allowances, and other conditions of service of the CEC and ECs will be equivalent to that of the Cabinet Secretary.

- **Removal:** The CEC may be removed in the same manner and on the same grounds as a Supreme Court Judge.
  - ECs may be removed only upon the recommendation of the CEC.

Judicial Interventions

- **Indira Gandhi vs Raj Narain (1975):** The Supreme Court of India held that free and fair elections are part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
- **T. N. Seshan vs Union of India (1995):** It validated the multi-member nature of the Commission and clarified that the CEC is "first among equals," not an absolute authority.
- **Vineet Narain vs Union of India (1997):** It clarified procedural safeguards relating to removal and functioning of independent institutions.
- **Anoop Baranwal vs Union of India (2023):** Recommended inclusion of the Chief Justice of India in the selection committee for Election Commissioners until Parliament enacted a law.

Major committees on electoral reforms

- **Dinesh Goswami Committee (1990):** It recommended stringent steps to curb booth capturing, including deployment of central forces and provision for re-polls where malpractice occurred.
- **Indrajit Gupta Committee (1998):** It examined the growing role of money power in elections and concluded that state funding was necessary to ensure a level playing field but such funding should be provided in kind rather than cash to prevent misuse.
  - The committee also suggested that only **recognised national and state parties** should be eligible for such support.
- **Law Commission of India:** It recommended that candidates should not be allowed to **contest from more than one constituency** to avoid unnecessary by-elections and public expenditure.
  - The report also **emphasised the need for internal democracy** within **political parties, transparency in political funding, and reforms to reduce defections** and instability in coalition politics.

Way Ahead

- The **appointment process** of Election Commissioners should be **made more broad-based** to enhance public confidence in the Commission's neutrality.
- Reforms in political funding, **including greater disclosure of donations**, are necessary to reduce undue influence of wealth.

- Continued improvement in election management systems, including secure electronic processes, can increase efficiency and trust. **Independent audits and verification mechanisms** should accompany technological adoption to address public concerns.

Source: TH

NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE 2.0 (NMP 2.0)

Context

- Recently, the Union Finance Minister has launched the **National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)**, targeting ₹**16.72 lakh crore** through asset monetisation over the period **2025–26 to 2029–30**.

About

- **National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)** launched by the Union Finance Minister, builds on the original NMP (2021-2025) by outlining a 16.72 lakh crore roadmap for FY 2026-2030.
- It targets operational **"brownfield" public assets** like highways and railways to unlock value through private investment, funding new greenfield infrastructure without raising fresh debt or taxes.
- **Developed by NITI Aayog** with line ministries, it's guided by the Ministry of Finance and monitored by the Core Group of Secretaries on Asset Monetisation (CGAM), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary.

Key Objectives

- Recycle existing assets to mobilize ₹5.8 lakh crore in private funds for capex.
- Boost private sector visibility via PPPs, InvITs (Infrastructure Investment Trusts), cash flow securitization, and strategic sales.
- Standardize processes from NMP 1.0 lessons, ensuring time-bound execution and proceeds routed to Consolidated Fund of India, PSUs, or states.

Major Sectoral Allocation

- **Highways, MMLPs, Ropeways:** ₹4.42 lakh crore
- **Power:** ₹2.77 lakh crore
- **Ports**: ₹2.64 lakh crore
- **Railways**: ₹2.62 lakh crore
- **Coal:** ₹2.16 lakh crore
- **Mines**: ₹1 lakh crore
- **Capital Recycling Model:** Asset monetisation follows the principle of **'Asset Recycling'**:

- ◆ Monetise operational brownfield assets;
- ◆ Use proceeds to fund greenfield infrastructure;
- ◆ It reduces fiscal burden, and public debt pressure.
- **Revenue Distribution:** Proceeds are expected to flow primarily into **Consolidated Fund of India,** Direct private investment, PSU/Port Authority allocations, and State Consolidated Funds.

Benefits of NMP 2.0

- **Capital Recycling:** Unlocks value from brownfield assets and reinvests proceeds into new (greenfield) infrastructure projects without increasing public debt.
- **Fiscal Consolidation:** Reduces pressure on government borrowing and supports better management of the fiscal deficit.
- **Enhanced Private Participation (PPP Boost):** Deepens Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), improving efficiency, innovation, and risk-sharing in infrastructure development.
- **Attraction of Long-Term Institutional Capital:** Draws pension funds, sovereign wealth funds, and global investors into Indian infrastructure.
- **Improved Asset Efficiency:** Professional management by private players enhances operational efficiency and service quality.
- **Development of Financial Markets:** Promotes instruments like **InvITs and TOT models**, broadening infrastructure as an asset class.
- **Boost to Logistics & Competitiveness:** Monetisation of highways, ports, railways, and logistics parks strengthens supply chains and reduces transaction costs.
- **Support to Viksit Bharat Vision:** Accelerates infrastructure-led growth essential for achieving developed nation status by 2047.
- **Job Creation & Multiplier Effect:** Infrastructure expansion generates direct and indirect employment.
- **Citizen Participation:** Public InvITs allow retail investors to participate in infrastructure growth.

Challenges Ahead of NMP 2.0

- **Asset Valuation Concerns:** Risk of **undervaluation of public assets**. Lack of transparent and standardized valuation mechanisms.
- **Political & Public Opposition** Perception of 'privatisation by stealth'. Resistance from trade unions and civil society.
- **Regulatory & Policy Uncertainty:** Frequent policy changes can deter long-term investors. Need for strong dispute resolution mechanisms in PPP contracts.

- **Risk Allocation Issues:** Improper risk-sharing between government and private players. Past PPP failures (e.g., traffic overestimation in highways) remain cautionary lessons.

Source: IE

UNLOCKING INDIA'S INLAND WATERWAYS POTENTIAL

Context

- Recently the third meeting of the Inland Waterways Development Council (IWDC) was held at Kochi, Kerala.

Current Status of Inland Waterways in India

- India has an extensive inland waterways network of **20,236 km**, comprising **17,980 km of rivers** and 2,256 km of canals suitable for mechanised crafts.
- India currently has **111 National Waterways (NWs)**, as declared under the National Waterways Act, 2016.
- **Cargo transported on national waterways** increased from 18.07 Million Metric Tonnes (MT) in 2013-14 to **145.5 Million MT in 2024–25**— a growth of over 700%.
- India aims to achieve **200 Million MT** of cargo movement via waterways by **2030** and **500 Million MT** by **2047.**

Significance of the Inland Waterways

- **Reducing Logistics Costs:** Logistics costs in India account for 14% of GDP, significantly higher than the global average of 8-10%.
- **Decongestion:** Promoting inland waterways will help alleviate congestion and reduce the burden on these critical transport networks.
- **Eco-Friendly Transport:** Reduced fuel consumption and emissions align with India's commitment to **sustainable development goals (SDGs)** and its climate action targets.
- **Economic Benefits:** Increased cargo movement via inland waterways will bolster trade and commerce, especially in regions adjoining National Waterways.

Challenges in Boosting Inland Waterways

- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Limited availability of modern terminals, jetties, and navigational aids hampers seamless cargo transportation.
- **Depth and Navigability Issues:** Many river stretches suffer from seasonal fluctuations, affecting their navigability.

- **Competition from Road and Rail:** Despite incentives, the established dominance of road and rail transport limits the shift towards waterways.
- **Regional Disparities:** Inland waterways infrastructure is largely concentrated in certain regions, leaving others underdeveloped.

Government Initiatives

- **Jalvahak scheme:** The scheme offers direct incentives to cargo owners for transporting goods via inland waterways for distances exceeding **300 km.**
    - **Reimbursement of up to 35%** of total operating expenditure incurred during cargo transportation is provided.
- **Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP):** Developing NW-1 with modern infrastructure and terminals.
- **Sagarmala Project:** Integration of inland waterways with coastal shipping and ports.
- **Freight Village Development:** Establishing logistic hubs near key waterways to boost multimodal transport.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)

- IWAI, is an **autonomous organization** constituted in 1986 under the **Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985.**
- IWAI is primarily responsible for **development, maintenance and regulation** of those waterways which have been declared as National Waterways under National Waterways Act, 2016.
- **The head office** of IWAI is located at **Noida.**

Inland Waterways Development Council

- **The Inland Waterways Development Council** was established in **2023** by the Government of India.
- **Objective:** Comprehensive development of inland waterways and the associated Inland Water Transport (IWT) ecosystem for improved cargo efficiency, passenger movement, and river cruise tourism, with active participation from States and Union Territories.

Source: BL

INDIA'S ENERGY SHIFT THROUGH THE GREEN AMMONIA ROUTE

In News

- India's energy transition is increasingly focusing on green hydrogen and its derivatives, with green ammonia emerging as a crucial pathway.

Green ammonia

- It is produced using green hydrogen, and is emerging as a leading clean fuel for fertilizers, energy, and marine applications.
- Globally, procurement mechanisms such as the EU's H2Global initiative and South Korea's Clean Hydrogen Portfolio Standard are driving market development.
- India's green ammonia auction under SECI's SIGHT programme (part of the National Green Hydrogen Mission) stands out for its scale and competitiveness.

Benefits of Green Ammonia

- **Decarbonization of Fertilizers:** India's fertilizer sector, heavily dependent on imported ammonia, can significantly cut emissions by adopting green ammonia.
- **Energy Storage & Transport:** Ammonia is easier to store and transport compared to hydrogen, making it a practical energy carrier.
- **Export Potential:** India can become a hub for green ammonia exports, especially to countries seeking clean fuels.
- **Industrial Applications:** green ammonia can be used in shipping, power generation, and chemical industries.
- **Strategic Independence:** Reduces reliance on fossil fuel imports, strengthening India's energy security.

Challenges

- **High Costs:** Current green ammonia production is more expensive than conventional ammonia.
- **Technology Readiness:** Large-scale electrolyzers and ammonia synthesis technologies need further development.
- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Storage, transport, and distribution networks for green ammonia are still limited.
- **Coal Dependence:** India's power sector remains heavily reliant on coal, complicating the transition.
- **Global Competition:** Other countries are also investing heavily, requiring India to scale rapidly to remain competitive.

Steps Taken by the Government

- The Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Programme has an outlay of ₹17,490 crore to promote green hydrogen in India.
    - It supports domestic manufacturing of electrolysers.
    - It supports the production of green hydrogen.

- **The National Green Hydrogen Mission** emphasizes ammonia as a key derivative for industrial decarbonization.
- **International Collaboration**: India is engaging with global partners to attract investment and technology transfer.
- **Pilot Projects:** Initiatives in fertilizer plants and shipping are being tested to integrate green ammonia.
- **Carbon Neutrality Goal:** India's declared target of net-zero emissions by 2070 places green ammonia at the heart of its energy roadmap.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- India's green ammonia strategy supports its energy transition by reducing fertilizer emissions, improving energy security, and creating export opportunities.
- India's green ammonia success stems from low renewable energy costs, effective contract structures, strong logistics, and targeted incentives.
- To maintain progress, it needs stable regulations, integrated renewable systems, blended finance, risk safeguards, and robust safety and certification frameworks.
- With sustained coordination, India can emerge as a global leader in clean ammonia.
- At the India Energy Week 2026, Prime Minister highlighted investment opportunities worth $500 billion in clean energy, positioning India as a global leader in the green ammonia landscape.

Source :TH

═══ NEWS IN SHORT ═══

CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHARI

Context

- The President of India, unveiled a bust of Shri Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, the first and only Indian Governor General of independent India at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

About C. Rajagopalachari

- **Early Life:** Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, popularly referred to as **Rajaji,** was born in **1878** in **Thorapalli, Tamil Nadu.**
  - His entry into public life was marked in 1917 when he became the chairperson of the municipality of Salem in 1917.
- **Role in India's Independence Movement:** Rajaji's meeting with Mahatma Gandhi in **1919**

transformed his political trajectory, prompting him to give up his legal career for the freedom struggle.

- He participated in agitations against the **Rowlatt Act, the Non-Cooperation movement, the Vaikom Satyagraha, and the Civil Disobedience Movement** and was jailed five times between 1912 and 1941.
- **Post-independence,** Rajaji served as the **last Governor-General of India till 1950.**
  - He briefly served as **Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister** between 1952 and 1954.
  - He founded the **Swatantra Party in 1959**, representing classical liberal economic ideas.
- **Literary Contribution:** His most popular works include a retelling of the **Mahabharata and Ramayana in English,** and **Ramayana – Chakravarti Thirumagan in Tamil.**
- **In 1954** he was conferred with the **Bharat Ratna** for his contribution to Indian politics and literature.

Source: TH

ALARA PHILOSOPHY

Context

- The U.S. Department of Energy has **eliminated the ALARA philosophy** from its directives and regulations, departing significantly from long-standing international practice.

About

- The **linear no-threshold (LNT) model** and the **ALARA principle** have served as the conceptual and operational foundations of the **global radiation protection framework for many decades.**
- **The LNT model** is a risk estimation framework that says **any amount of ionising radiation, no matter how small, carries some risk of causing harm,** especially cancer.
  - In other words, there is no threshold below which radiation is considered completely risk-free. And the risk increases linearly with dose.
- **ALARA, short for "as low as reasonably achievable",** is the operational philosophy of radiation protection.
  - The philosophy balances safety with feasibility, cost, and societal need, and its aim is to improve continuously, including better shielding, administrative procedures, and training.
  - ALARA aims to **reduce unnecessary exposure** using engineering controls and encourages a safety culture.

- **Applied in:** Nuclear power plants, Medical imaging (X-rays, CT scans), Industrial radiography and Research laboratories.

Source: TH

'RAH-VEER' SCHEME

In News

- The Delhi government is going to implement the Centre's **'Rah-Veer' scheme** to motivate citizens to assist seriously injured road accidents.

'Rah-Veer' scheme

- The scheme, aligned with the **Good Samaritan Rules under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019.**
- It provides **legal protection and financial incentives** to encourage prompt humanitarian action.
- **Features**: citizens who help seriously injured road accident victims within the "golden hour" will receive a ₹25,000 cash reward.
  - A district-level committee will evaluate cases, and the reward will be directly transferred to beneficiaries' bank accounts.
  - Additionally, 10 outstanding Rah-Veers annually will receive ₹1 lakh and a certificate.

It aims to overcome citizens' hesitation to assist accident victims due to legal or procedural fears.

Source: HT

MILESTONE UNDER PM SURYA GHAR SCHEME

In News

- Recently, the Prime Minister praised 30 lakh households adopting rooftop solar under the **PM Surya Ghar scheme**, marking a key clean energy milestone.
  - **Gujarat leads in adoption**, followed by Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, with widespread participation across other states and UTs.

PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSG: MBY).

- The Government of India launched **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSG: MBY) in February, 2024.**
- It aims to **achieve rooftop solar (RTS) installations** in one crore households in the residential sector by FY 2026-27 with an outlay of Rs 75,021 crore.
- The scheme allows **eligible households to install solar panels** via a national portal, promoting affordable clean energy.

- The scheme's easy financing options, including **collateral-free loans up to ₹2 lakh at a 6.75% subsidized interest rate** through 12 Public Sector Banks, have further accelerated adoption.

Eligibility

The household must be an Indian citizen.	The household must own a house with a roof that is suitable for installing solar panels.
The household must have a valid electricity connection.	The household must not have availed any other subsidy for solar panels.

Benefits

- **Free Electricity for Households:** The scheme provides households with free electricity by installing subsidised rooftop solar panels, significantly reducing their energy costs.
- **Reduced Electricity Costs for the Government:** The scheme's widespread solar adoption is expected to save the government in electricity costs.
- **Increased Use of Renewable Energy:** The scheme encourages the adoption of renewable energy sources, contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly energy mix in India.
- **Reduced Carbon Emissions:** The transition to solar energy under this scheme will help lower carbon emissions, supporting India's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

Source :PIB

IAF'S TEJAS FLEET UNDERGOES MAINTENANCE CHECK

Context

- The Indian Air Force's (IAF) **Tejas fighter aircraft** fleet is undergoing a "maintenance check" to determine the reason for the recent incident that occurred while one of the fighters was taking off from a base.

About Tejas fighter aircraft

- LCA Tejas is a **4.5 generation**, **all weather** aircraft. The aircraft is designed to be a **multi-role aircraft** capable of taking up offensive air support, close combat and ground attack roles at ease.
  - It is also designed to undertake Ground Maritime Operations.

- **LCA Mk1A:** It is the most advanced version of the LCA Tejas.
  - ◆ It is equipped with AESA Radar, EW suite consisting of radar warning and self-protection jamming, Digital Map Generator (DMG), Smart Multi-function Displays (SMFD), Combined Interrogator and Transponder (CIT), Advanced Radio Altimeter and other advances features.

Specification	Value
Length	13.2 m
Width	8.2 m
Height	4.4 m
Max Takeoff Mass	13,500 Kgs
Engine	GE F404-IN20
Engine Thrust (A/B)	85 KN
G limits	+8g / -3.5g
Max speed	1.6 Mach

Source: IE

BAFTA – THE BRITISH ACADEMY OF FILM AND TELEVISION ARTS

In News
- Manipuri film Boong, produced by Farhan Akhtar's Excel Entertainment, won the prestigious BAFTA Award for Best Children's & Family Film in London.

About British Academy of Film and Television Arts(BAFTA)
- It is a British organization that **gives awards annually** for British and international film, television, and games.
- It **aims to honor individuals** who contribute to the advancement of the film industry and to give awards for artistic merit.
- It was officially **renamed the British Academy of Film and Television Arts in 1976.**
- It also **runs educational and talent development programs**, such as scholarships to the National Film and Television School.
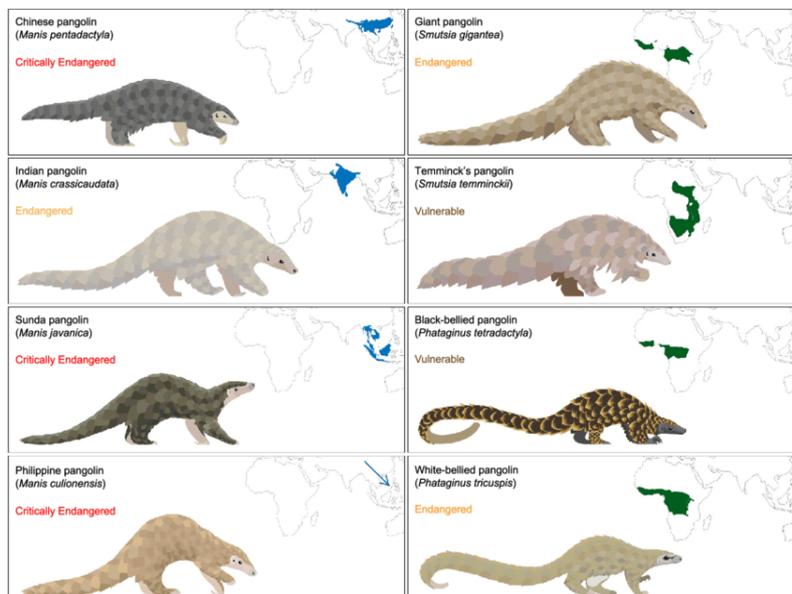
Source :Air

PANGOLINS

Context
- CITES report revealed that over 500,000 pangolins were seized globally between 2016 and 2024.

About Pangolin
- Pangolins are mammals covered in **keratin scales**, the only such mammals on Earth.
- They feed on ants, termites, and larvae using their long sticky tongues.
- When threatened, they use **volvation** (rolling into a ball) to protect themselves with their armor-like scales.
- They are considered **"ecosystem engineers"** due to their role in soil aeration and pest control.
- There are **eight recognised species of pangolins globally** — four species are found in Africa (Black-bellied, White-bellied, Giant Ground, and Temminck's Ground pangolins) and four **species are found in Asia** (Indian, Philippine, Sunda, and Chinese pangolins).

Source: DTE