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18TH CIVIL SERVICES DAY

Context

- At the 18th Civil Services Day celebrations the Vice President invoked the idea that **“With great power comes great responsibility,”** urging civil servants to uphold ethical governance, integrity, and public service values in achieving the vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047**.

Civil Service Day

- Civil Services Day is observed on **21st April** every year to commemorate the day in 1947 when **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** addressed the first batch of civil servants at the **Metcalfe House**, New Delhi.
- He termed civil servants as the **“Steel frame of India,”** emphasizing their role in maintaining unity and integrity.

Constitutional Provisions of Civil Services

- Article 309** empowers Parliament and State Legislatures to regulate recruitment and conditions of service.
- Article 310** of the Constitution states that civil servants of the Union and the States hold office during the pleasure of the President or the Governor, respectively.
- Article 311** provides safeguards for civil servants against arbitrary dismissal.
- Article 312** outlines the process for creating All India Services, such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Police Service (IPS), and the Indian Forest Service (IFoS).
- Articles 315 to 323** of the Indian Constitution establish Public Service Commissions (PSCs) for both the Union (UPSC) and each state (SPSC).

History of Civil Services in India

- Lord Cornwallis** is considered as ‘Father of Civil Services in India’.
- Lord Wellesley** founded the College of **Fort William in Calcutta in 1800** to educate young recruits for the Civil Services.
 - But the directors of the Company, in 1806, replaced it with their own **East Indian College at Haileybury in England**.
- Before 1853 East India Company directors used to appoint Civil Servants. Board of Control members were allowed to make some nominations.
- The Charter Act of 1853** abolished the patronage system and introduced open competitive examinations.

- The first competitive exams for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) were held in London in **1855**.
- Satyendranath Tagore** was the first Indian to clear ICS in 1864.

Ethical Dimensions of Power and Responsibility in Civil Services

- Nature of Power in Civil Services:** Civil servants **exercise significant authority**, administrative discretion, and control over public resources, which directly impacts citizens’ lives.
 - This position creates an obligation to ensure that **power is used strictly for public welfare and national interest**.
- Impartiality in Decision-Making:** Civil servants must distinguish clearly between legitimate policy direction and undue external pressure.
 - Administrative actions must reflect **fairness, objectivity, and neutrality**, ensuring equal treatment of all citizens.
- Ethical Foundations in Indian Thought:** The teachings of Thiruvalluvar emphasize that **“Aram” (righteousness)** is the highest virtue in public life. It leads to both moral legitimacy of the state and sustainable socio-economic development.

Challenges Faced by Civil Servants

- Political Bias:** At times lack of neutrality of Civil servants result in political bias in discharge of critical functions.
 - The cause and effect of this phenomenon is the increasing political interference in all aspects of bureaucracy including postings and transfers.
- Lack of Expertise:** Career bureaucrats who are generalists, may lack the expertise needed to address technical challenges.
- Red-tapism:** Excessive procedural formalities often delay decision-making and hinder timely service delivery.
- Mental health issues:** High-pressure environments, and long working hours impact the mental well-being of civil servants.
- Resistance to innovation:** A rigid administrative culture discourages experimentation and adoption of new practices.
- Outdated rules and procedures:** Many service regulations are colonial-era legacies that are not compatible with modern governance needs.

Governance reforms to enhance efficiency of bureaucracy

- Mission Karmayogi National Program:** It is a flagship programme of Government of India **launched in 2020** for training of civil servants,

which intends to transform the Civil Services from 'Rule Based' to 'Role Based' way of functioning and Citizen Centric.

- **Lateral Entry into Civil Services** to bring domain expertise and promote competitiveness in administration.
- **e-Governance Initiatives:** Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) for grievance redressal, SPARROW for performance appraisal, and digitization of service records.

Concluding remarks

- The credibility of civil services depends on the consistent alignment of power with ethical responsibility, impartiality, and commitment to public welfare.
- A value-driven administrative framework will ensure effective governance, citizen trust, and equitable development outcomes.

Source: AIR

INDIA PUSHES FOR GREATER GLOBAL SOUTH REPRESENTATION IN UNSC PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP

Context

- India, at the **2026 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development (FfD)** and **UN Security Council reform discussions**, advocated urgent restructuring of the **UN Security Council (UNSC)**, greater representation of the **Global South** and reform of **global financial architecture**.

Issues in UN Security Council (UNSC)

- **Outdated Structure:** Reflects **post-World War II power distribution (1945)**, and does not represent current global realities like rise of **India, Brazil, Germany, Japan**, and increasing importance of **Africa & Global South**.
- **Lack of Representation: Africa & Latin America** have **no permanent seats**; Global South remains **underrepresented**; and creates a **democratic deficit**.
- **Veto Power Problem:** P5 (USA, UK, France, Russia, China) hold **veto power**, blocks action even in humanitarian crises, and leads to **policy paralysis** (e.g., Syria, Ukraine conflicts). It is seen as **undemocratic and unequal**.
- **Legitimacy Crisis:** Decisions often perceived as biased, influenced by great power politics. It reduces trust in UNSC resolutions.
- **Ineffectiveness in Conflict Resolution:** Failure in preventing wars, and addressing prolonged conflicts.

- ♦ Peacekeeping success limited by political disagreements among P5.
- **Geopolitical Rivalries:** Increasing tensions ie USA vs China & Russia vs West lead to gridlock in decision-making.
- **Slow Reform Process:** Reform requires **UN Charter amendment**, and approval by **2/3rd UN members and all P5**. Political resistance delays reforms
- **Regional Rivalries:** Disagreements among countries ie India–Pakistan; and Brazil–Argentina. Lack of consensus weakens reform momentum
- **Limited Focus on Development Issues:** UNSC prioritizes **security over development**. Ignore emerging threats climate change, pandemics, and economic instability.

India's Position on UNSC Reform

- **Core Argument:** Present UNSC structure is **outdated**; and **under-representative of developing nations**.
 - ♦ **India's Demands:** Expansion in both **permanent membership**, and **non-permanent membership**.
 - Greater inclusion of **Global South countries, and Africa** (alignment with African model).
 - **Key Groups:** It enhances legitimacy, and effectiveness of UNSC, and aligns with India's aspiration for **permanent membership**.
 - ♦ **G4 Nations:** India, Brazil, Germany, Japan
 - ♦ **African Union (Ezulwini Consensus):** Demands 2 permanent seats.
 - ♦ **L.69 Group:** Coalition of developing countries supporting reform.
- **India and UN Peacekeeping:** India is among the largest troop contributors; **more than 275,000 personnel since 1948**
 - ♦ **Focus areas:** Conflict resolution and Peacebuilding
 - ♦ **Recent Engagement:** Discussion focused on strengthening **peacekeeping operations**.

Who Blocks Reform and Why

- **China opposes India's permanent membership** on grounds of strategic competition. Can unilaterally block Charter amendment through its P5 veto.
- **Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club)** led by Italy and Pakistan opposes any expansion of permanent membership.
- Charter amendment threshold reform requires amendment of **Articles 23, 27, and 108 of the UN Charter** which are demanding (Approval by 2/3 of UNGA members).

Present Structure of UNSC

- **Composition: 5 Permanent Members (P5):** USA, UK, France, Russia, China; and **10 Non-permanent Members** (2-year term)

Global South

- It refers to **developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America**, characterised by lower industrialisation levels, historical colonial exploitation, and development challenges.
- It represents the majority of **UN membership but lacks proportional power.**

Issues in Global Financial System

- **\$4 trillion annual Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) financing gap**
- Inequitable structure of **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** like IMF, and World Bank.
- Limited voice of **developing countries**
- **India's Proposals:**
 - ♦ Build a **fair, inclusive, development-oriented financial system**
 - ♦ **Reform International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** to reflect current global realities
 - ♦ Strengthen **Global South representation**
 - ♦ Promote **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** as a development tool
 - ♦ Align reforms with **Sevilla Commitment (FfD agenda).**

Significance for India & Global Governance

- **For India:** Strengthens role as leader of Global South, and responsible global power.
- **For World:** Enhances legitimacy of UNSC, effectiveness in conflict resolution; and moves toward multipolar and inclusive order.

Conclusion

- India's interventions at the UN reflect a consistent push for **systemic reforms in global governance institutions**, addressing both **financial inequalities** and **political underrepresentation.**

- These reforms are critical for achieving **sustainable development goals** and ensuring a **balanced international order.**

Source: DD News

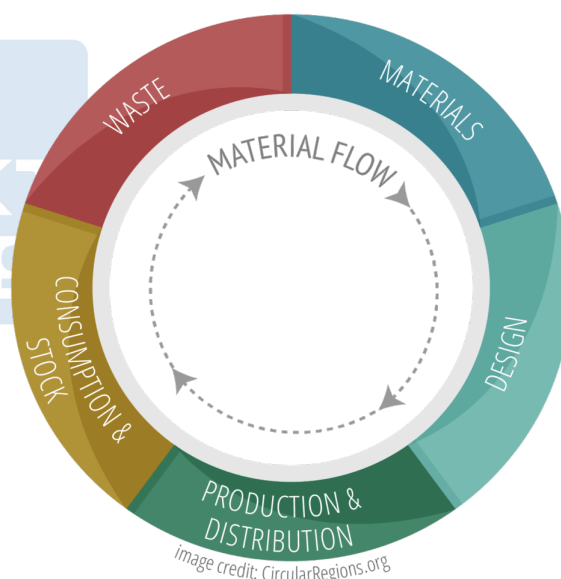
CIRCULAR ECONOMY: TURNING WASTE INTO WEALTH

Context

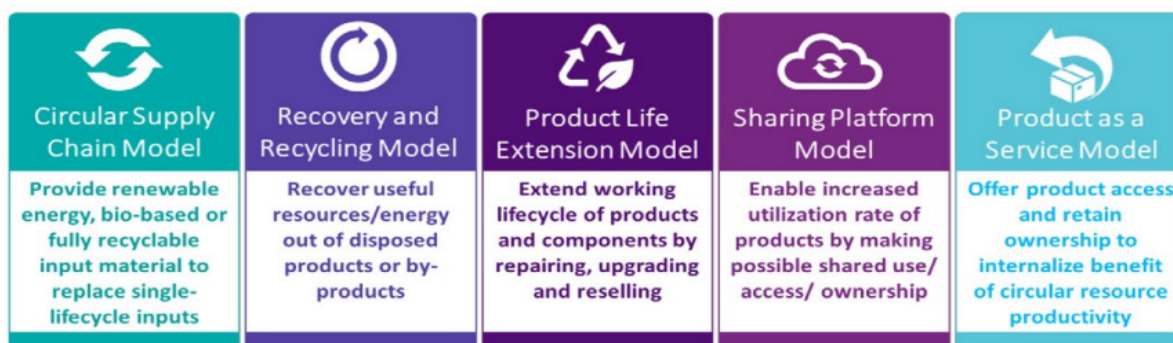
- Union Minister Jitendra Singh highlighted that the world is undergoing a paradigm shift towards a circular economy, where waste is increasingly treated as a resource, at the **Global Symposium on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy** held in New Delhi.

What is Circular Economy?

- The circular economy (CE) is a model of production that **prioritises waste reduction or elimination at all stages** of the product life cycle, from raw materials extraction and manufacturing to disposal and reuse.



- **India's circular economy** is expected to have a **market value of \$2 trillion** and create **10 million jobs** by the year **2050.**



Significance of Circular Economy

- **Economic Opportunities:** The UNDP estimates that a global switch to circular economy models could generate **\$4.5 trillion** in economic benefits by **2030**, while also **reducing emissions** and creating stable green jobs.
- **Job Creation:** Expands employment opportunities in recycling, refurbishment, remanufacturing, and sustainable product design.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Businesses adopting circular models gain a market edge as consumers increasingly prefer sustainable products.

Case Studies in Circular Economy Transition

- **Sweden's Waste-to-Energy Model:** Sweden is a global leader in the circular economy, with less than **1% of household waste sent to landfills**.
 - ♦ Approximately **50% of waste is recycled**, while the other **50% is converted into energy** through advanced waste-to-energy (WTE) incineration plants, providing district heating to ~1 million homes and electricity to 250,000 homes.
- **Indore's "Waste-to-Wealth" Model:** Indore hosts **Asia's largest** municipal solid waste-based **Bio-CNG plant**, processing 550 TPD of organic waste to generate ~17,000 kg Bio-CNG and 100 tonnes of manure daily, thereby creating a closed-loop waste-to-energy system.
 - ♦ The city's **100% segregation, zero-landfill model, PPP financing, and carbon credit monetisation** demonstrate a scalable urban circular economy that integrates waste management with energy security and revenue generation.

India's Leadership in Circular Economy

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-U):** Strengthening urban waste management with **3R (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) principles**.
- **GOBAR-Dhan Scheme:** Promoting waste-to-wealth initiatives through biogas and organic waste processing.
 - ♦ This scheme currently covers **67.8%** of the total number of districts in India, with 1008 biogas plants being fully operational as of February 2025.
- **E-Waste Management Rules (2022):** Strengthening circular economy practices in electronic waste disposal.

- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Plastic:** Encouraging industries to take accountability for plastic waste.
 - ♦ India banned single use plastic in **2022**.
- **The 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific** was held in Jaipur, India, in March 2025, marking a significant milestone in regional cooperation for sustainable waste management and circular economy initiatives.

Challenges in Implementing Circular Economy

- **Technical expertise:** Many businesses, municipalities, and citizens are unfamiliar with circular economy principles and lack the technical knowledge to implement them effectively.
- **High initial investment costs:** Setting up circular systems, such as recycling infrastructure or sustainable product design, requires significant upfront capital.
- **Uneven corporate Adoption:** SMEs, which form a large part of India's economy, are largely not onboard, making the transition non-uniform across sectors.
- **Insufficient enforcement policy:** While policies exist, weak enforcement and limited incentives slow down adoption.

Way Ahead

- There is a **need for a trickle-down effect** where circular economy concepts reach all levels of industry, beyond large corporations.
- **Promote repair and reuse** of products to extend their lifecycle and reduce resource consumption.
- Improve recycling processes to prevent accumulation and environmental pollution through **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiatives**.

Source: AIR

FOOD PROCESSING ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

Context

- India's food processing sector has emerged as a critical link between agriculture and industry, driving value addition, improving farmer incomes, and expanding export potential.

Food Processing Sector

- Food processing refers to transformation of raw agricultural materials into consumable products, ranging from simple cleaning to complex industrial manufacturing.
- It operates at three levels:

- ♦ **Primary** processing involves cleaning, grading, and packaging of produce.
- ♦ **Secondary** processing converts raw inputs into intermediate products such as flour.
- ♦ **Tertiary** processing produces ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook food products.

Importance of the Sector

- Food processing enhances shelf life and improves food safety by reducing contamination risks.
- It supports nutrition and convenience, enabling availability of processed and ready-to-eat foods for urban populations.
- The sector strengthens farmer incomes and rural employment by creating demand for agricultural produce and generating jobs across the value chain.
- The sector contributes significantly to the economy, with Gross Value Added increasing from 1.34 lakh crore (2014–15) to 2.24 lakh crore (2023–24).
- It plays a key role in export growth, with processed food exports rising from 13.7% to 20.4% share in agricultural exports (2014–15 to 2024–25).

Drivers of Growth in Food Processing Sector

- India's **demographic dividend** and urbanisation are increasing demand for processed foods, with the market projected to grow from USD 263 billion to USD 470 billion by 2025.
- **Digital transformation** has enabled direct farmer-to-market linkages and expansion of e-commerce and food delivery platforms.
- **Supportive policies** such as 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and schemes like PLISFPI have boosted investment.
- Innovation in health-oriented and millet-based products and adoption of agri-tech solutions are improving product diversity and quality.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry

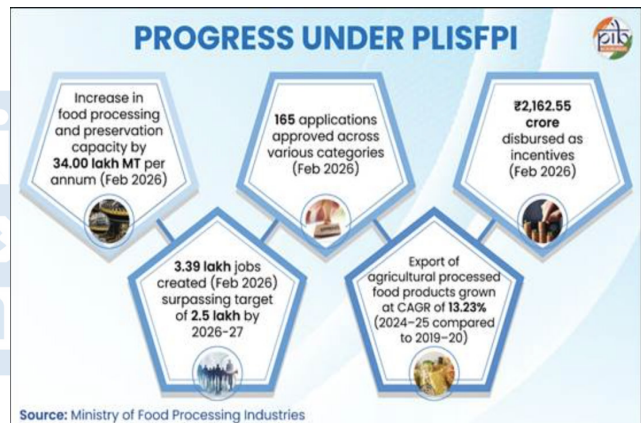
- The **PLISFPI** provides incentives based on incremental sales. It has been a major policy push to strengthen this ecosystem and position India as a global processing hub.



- The scheme aims to create global Indian food brands while increasing production and exports.
- It is structured into three components:
 - ♦ **Category I** focuses on large-scale manufacturing of key segments such as ready-to-eat foods, processed fruits and vegetables, marine products, and mozzarella cheese.
 - ♦ **Category II** promotes innovation among Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), including organic and niche products.
 - ♦ **Category III** supports branding and marketing abroad, with reimbursement up to 50% of expenses subject to limits.
- A dedicated component for millet-based products promotes value addition and diversification.

Current State of the Food Processing Sector

- 165 applications have been approved across 274 project locations, indicating strong industry participation.



- Out of 165 approved applications, 69 are MSMEs, showing strong inclusion of small enterprises. MSMEs have received targeted incentives, supporting innovation and decentralised growth.
- Investments of about 9,207 crore have been mobilised, with 2,162.55 crore incentives disbursed.
- Processing capacity has increased by 34 lakh metric tonnes per annum, strengthening infrastructure.
- Employment generation has reached 3.39 lakh jobs, exceeding the target of 2.5 lakh.
- Processed food exports grew at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 13.23%, with cumulative exports of 89,053 crore (2021–2025).

Challenges faced by the Sector

- The sector faces a **fragmented supply chain**, with over 86% of farmers being small and marginal, limiting scale and efficiency.

- **Infrastructure deficits**, especially in cold storage, lead to 25–30% post-harvest losses, costing about 92,651 crore annually.
- A **complex regulatory framework** involving multiple agencies increases compliance burden and uncertainty.
- There is a **skill gap**, with only 3% of the workforce formally trained.
- **Limited access to finance**, particularly for MSMEs, restricts investment in technology and expansion.
- Issues related to **quality standards and export compliance** result in rejection of products in global markets.
- Environmental concerns such as **plastic packaging and sustainability challenges** are increasing regulatory pressure.
- **Price volatility in agricultural commodities** creates uncertainty in production and pricing.

Government Initiatives

- Key schemes include **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana** and **Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme**.
- A ₹2,000 crore **Special Food Processing Fund** has been created with **NABARD** to support investment.

Way Forward

- Developing integrated food processing clusters near production centres.
- Adoption of technology-driven supply chains using artificial intelligence, blockchain, and Internet of Things.
- Financial reforms such as sector-specific credit schemes and credit guarantees.
- Strengthening quality standardisation and global compliance will enhance export competitiveness.
- Regulatory simplification through a single-window clearance system.
- Promoting sustainable processing and eco-friendly packaging.
- Increasing investment in research and development.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT

ADI SHANKARACHARYA

In News

- The Prime Minister of India paid tribute to Adi Shankaracharya on his Jayanti.

About Adi Shankaracharya

- Adi Shankaracharya (approximately 788–820 CE) was a philosopher, theologian, and saint born in Kalady, Kerala.
- Shankaracharya's defining contribution to **Indian philosophy is Advaita Vedanta**, the **doctrine of non-dualism**.
 - ♦ He taught that **Atman (individual soul)** and **Brahman (universal consciousness)** are identical, not two separate entities. The world's apparent reality is **Maya (illusion)** which dissolves upon attaining **Jnana (true knowledge)**.
- He also introduced the **Shanmata system** organising worship of **six primary deities (Shiva, Vishnu, Shakti, Ganesha, Muruga, and Surya)** under a single philosophical umbrella presenting each as a valid path to Brahman and reducing sectarian conflict across Hindu traditions.
- Shankaracharya wrote authoritative Bhashyas (commentaries) on the Prasthanatrayi — the three foundational texts of Vedanta: **the Brahma Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, and 12 major Upanishads**.
- He composed over 72 devotional hymns including **Soundarya Lahari, Sivananda Lahari, and Nirvana Shatakam**.

Source: PIB

SMILE SCHEME

Context

- The SMILE Scheme is transforming lives across India by promoting inclusive rehabilitation and social reintegration of vulnerable communities.

About

- Launched in **2022**, the Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) is implemented by the **Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
- It is **India's first unified national framework** designed to support vulnerable groups at every stage, from identification and rescue to healthcare, rehabilitation, education, counselling, skill development, and long-term economic independence.
- **Key Components:**
 - ♦ One of its components was the sub-scheme to **identify, profile, and rehabilitate individuals** engaged in the act of begging with their consent.
 - ♦ The other component of the scheme is for the **empowerment of transgender persons**.
- **Objectives:** Make religious, tourist, and historical urban spaces "beggary-free".

- **Progress:** As of January 2026, a total of 30,257 individuals have been identified as engaged in the act of begging, and 8,129 individuals have been rehabilitated in different cities.

Source: PIB

SHEKHA JHEEL BIRD SANCTUARY DESIGNATED AS NEW RAMSAR SITES

Context

- India designated **Shekha Jheel Bird Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh** as its **99th** Ramsar Site, with Uttar Pradesh now having **12th** sites on the list.

About Shekha Jheel Bird Sanctuary

- It is a **freshwater** wetland ecosystem, formed by the **Upper Ganges Canal** in **Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh**.
- It is a key habitat for migratory birds on the **Central Asian Flyway** and wintering ground for species such as **Bar-headed Goose, Painted Stork** and **various species of ducks and waterfowl**.

India's Latest Additions in Ramsar site

- **Siliserh Lake (Rajasthan):** 95th Ramsar site
- **Kopra Jalashay (Chhattisgarh):** 96th Ramsar Sites
- **Patna Bird Sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh):** 97th Ramsar Sites
- **Chhari-Dhand Conservation Reserve (Gujarat):** 98th Ramsar Sites

What is the Ramsar Convention?

- A Ramsar site is a **wetland designated** as one of **international importance** under the Ramsar Convention.
- The Ramsar Convention is one of the oldest **inter-governmental accords** signed by member countries to preserve the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.
- It was signed on **February 2, 1971** in **Ramsar, Iran** and came into force in 1975.
 - ♦ India became a signatory to the **Ramsar Convention in 1982**.

Source: PIB

TRUCK MOUNTED ATTENUATORS (TMAS)

Context

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is deploying advanced safety systems like **Truck Mounted Attenuators (TMAs)** to enhance safety on National Highways.

What is Truck Mounted Attenuators (TMAs)?

- TMAs are specially designed impact-absorbing safety devices that play a critical role in protecting both workers and road users.
- In the event of a collision, these systems **absorb and dissipate kinetic energy**, reducing the force of impact. This helps:
 - ♦ Protect maintenance crews working ahead of the vehicle;
 - ♦ Reduce injury risks for occupants of the impacting vehicle;
 - ♦ Minimize the severity of accidents in highway work zones.
- In many ways, TMAs act like an **invisible shield** — standing between danger and human life.
- The **deployed TMAs** are equipped with high-intensity wig-wag warning lights, enhancing visibility in low-light and foggy conditions.



Source: PIB

TRAWL ASSEMBLY

In News

- The Ministry of Defence signed contracts with Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) and Electro Pneumatics and Hydraulics (India) Private Limited for the procurement of **TRAWL Assembly for T-72 and T-90 tanks**.

About

- A **TRAWL Assembly** is a mine-clearing device mounted on the front of a battle tank to safely detect and detonate anti-tank mines before the tank rolls over them.
- The **T-72 (Ajeya)** is a **Soviet-era main battle tank** that entered service in 1973, with approximately 25,000 units built globally.
- The **T-90 (Bhishma)** is a Russian main battle tank that entered service in 1992 — designed as a

modernised evolution of the T-72 with significantly upgraded fire control systems, composite armour, and electronic countermeasures.

Source: TH

WORLD EARTH DAY 2026

Context

- Earth Day is observed annually on **April 22** to promote environmental protection and sustainable practices.

About

- **History:** The idea of observing Earth Day was proposed by **Gaylord Nelson**, after environmental concerns gained prominence following incidents like the **Santa Barbara oil spill**.
 - ♦ Earth Day was first observed in **1970 in the United States** as a response to rising environmental degradation.
 - ♦ The **United Nations General Assembly** officially designated **22 April** as International Mother Earth Day through a resolution adopted in **2009**.
- **Theme for 2026:** "Our Power, Our Planet".

Source: PIB

BREAKTHROUGH PRIZES 2026

Context

- The Breakthrough Prize Foundation announced the 2026 laureates.

About Breakthrough Prizes

- The Breakthrough Prizes were **established in 2012 by** Sergey Brin, Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg, Julia and Yuri Milner, and Anne Wojcicki to recognise **transformative contributions in fundamental sciences**.
- The prizes cover **life sciences, fundamental physics, and mathematics, and each award carries \$3 million**.
- Often referred to as the "**Oscars of Science**," they have awarded over \$340 million since inception.

Life Sciences Awards

- **Stuart Orkin** and **Swee Lay Thein** were recognised for **advancing treatments for sickle cell disease** and **beta-thalassemia**, leading to the development of **Casgevy**, the first CRISPR-based therapy that edits patients' blood stem cells.
- **Jean Bennett**, **Katherine High**, and **Albert Maguire** were also awarded Life Sciences Prize

for developing the first FDA-approved gene-replacement therapy that restores vision in **Leber congenital amaurosis**, with long-lasting benefits.

- **Rosa Rademakers** and **Bryan Traynor** were honoured for identifying a key genetic mutation responsible for ALS and frontotemporal dementia, enabling genetic testing for affected families.

Mathematics Prize

- **Frank Merle** was awarded for **advancing the understanding of dynamic systems and wave evolution**, including proving that certain equations can become infinite in finite time, overturning earlier assumptions.

Fundamental Physics Prize

- **Collaborations at CERN, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and Fermilab** were recognised for **precision measurement of the muon's magnetic moment**, testing the limits of existing physical theories.
- A **Special Breakthrough Prize** was awarded to **David Gross** for lifetime contributions, including work on the strong nuclear force.

Source: TH

SALWEEN RIVER

In News

- Alarming levels of arsenic contamination have been detected in the Salween River.
 - ♦ Arsenic is a naturally occurring toxic metalloid that leaches into river systems from geological formations, mining activities, and industrial discharge.

About the River

- The Salween is one of Asia's great rivers known by different names across the countries it flows through: Nu in China, Thanlwin in Myanmar.
- It is the second longest river in Southeast Asia after the Mekong, and the longest free-flowing river without a dam in Southeast Asia.
- The river originates from the Tanggula (Tangula) Mountains on the Tibetan Plateau.

Source: TOI

SAMRIDDH GRAM INITIATIVE & WSIS PRIZES 2026

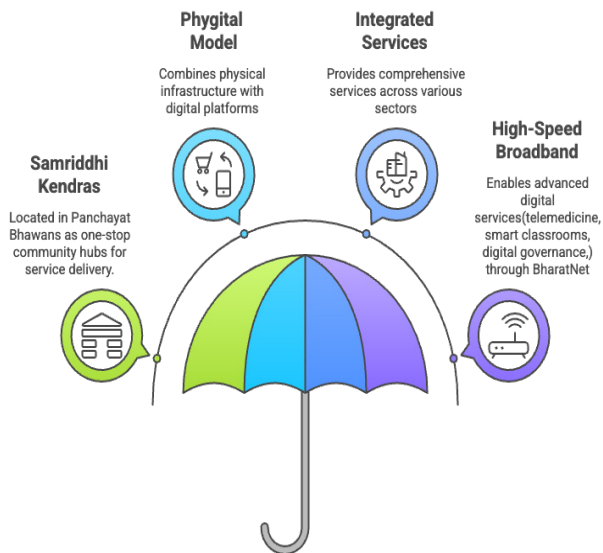
Context

- Recently, Samriddh Gram Initiative was nominated for the **WSIS Prizes 2026** under **Action Line AL C6: Enabling Environment**.

- ◆ This marks the global recognition of India's use of digital infrastructure for inclusive rural development.

About Samridhh Gram Initiative

Key Features of the Samridhh Gram Initiative



- **Samridhh Gram: Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model**, enabled by BharatNet, is an initiative of the **Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications**.

- As a pilot initiative, Samridhh Gram integrates **physical and digital ('phygital')** service delivery to provide multiple citizen services in rural areas.
- The initiative is supported by the **Digital Empowerment Foundation** for field operations and community mobilisation.
- Recently, India's first Samridhh Kendra was inaugurated at **Umri village in Guna, Madhya Pradesh**.

World Summit on the Information Society and WSIS Prizes

- The World Summit on the Information Society is a global multi-stakeholder platform established in 2004 to advance digital development and inclusive information societies.
- The **WSIS Prizes, launched in 2012** under the WSIS Stocktaking Process, recognise **ICT-driven projects** contributing to sustainable development and the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
- The prizes serve as a global mechanism to identify and promote impactful digital initiatives, recognising stakeholders as winners and champions for advancing WSIS Action Lines and the Global Digital Compact.

Source: PIB

