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Time: 45 Min

Date: 19-06-2026

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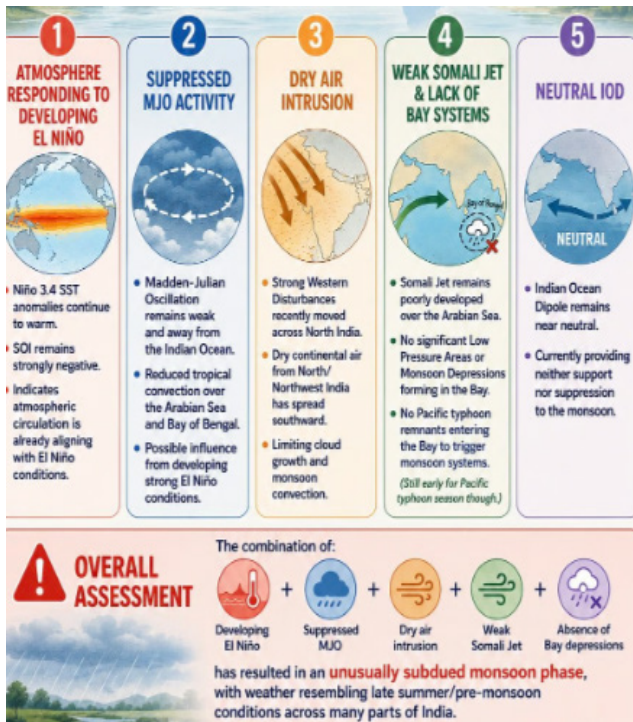
FIVE WEATHER SYSTEMS IMPACTING INDIAN MONSOON

Context

- India's southwest monsoon **may remain weak or stalled for a week** with **five rain-suppressing factors active at the same time**.

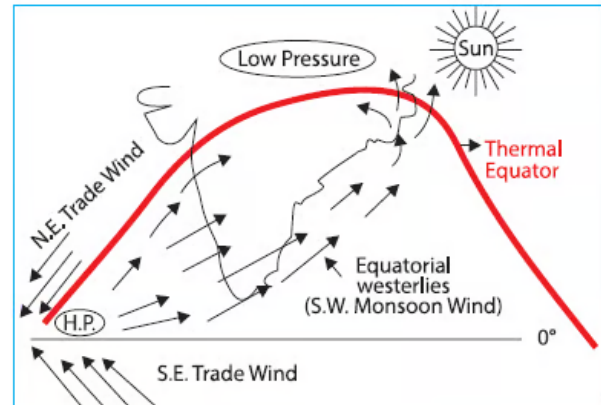
About

- India recorded a **38% countrywide rainfall deficit** between June 1 and June 17, with **central India facing the highest deficit at 62%**.
- Five rain-suppressing factors are:** Developing El Niño conditions, weak Madden-Julian Oscillation activity, dry westerly winds, a weak Somali Jet and neutral Indian Ocean Dipole conditions.



Southwest Monsoon

- Onset and Retreat:** The monsoon season in India generally **starts in early June and lasts until September**.
 - The onset of the monsoon is marked by the arrival of the **southwest monsoon winds**, which bring moisture-laden air from the Indian Ocean.
 - The withdrawal or retreat of the monsoon typically **begins in October**.
 - The northeast monsoon**, occurring from October to December, brings rainfall to parts of southern India.

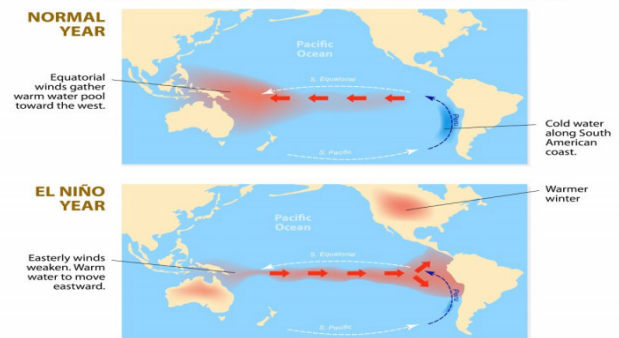


Factors Impacting Monsoon

El Niño

- El Niño means **Little Boy** in Spanish. It is a climate phenomenon characterized by the periodic warming of sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.
 - During El Niño, **trade winds weaken**.
 - Warm water is pushed back east, toward the west coast of the Americas and as a result **cold water is pushed towards Asia**.

THE EL NIÑO PHENOMENON

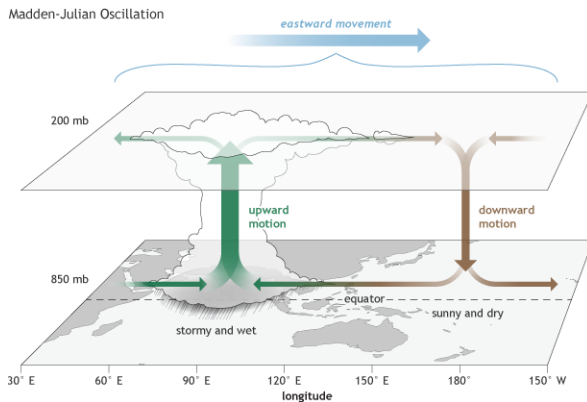


- Impact of El Niño on weather patterns:** It leads to rise in global temperature, weakens monsoon, increases risk of wildfires and triggers extreme weather events such as hurricanes, and cyclones, particularly in the Pacific Ocean and Atlantic.

Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)

- The MJO is a moving system of **winds, clouds, and pressure** that brings rain as it circles around the equator. It was discovered in **1971** by **Roland Madden and Paul Julian**.
- The system travels eastward at **4–8 m/s** and circles the globe typically every 30–60 days, though it can take up to **90 days**.
- As it moves, strong MJO activity often **splits the planet into two parts** — one in which the MJO is in **active phase** and brings rainfall, and the other in which it suppresses rainfall.

- During an active MJO phase, regions within its influence experience above-average rainfall, often due to increased **cloud formation, convection, and cyclonic activity**.



Western Disturbance

- A Western Disturbance (WD) is an **extra-tropical weather system** that originates outside India and moves from west to east, bringing rain, snowfall, and storms to northern parts of the Indian subcontinent.
- Origin and Formation:** Western disturbances originate over the **Mediterranean region, Black Sea, or Caspian Sea**.
 - They form when **cold polar air interacts with warmer, moist air**, creating **low-pressure systems**.
 - These systems are carried eastward by westerly winds in the upper atmosphere, particularly the subtropical westerly jet stream.

Indian Ocean Dipole:

- In 1999, N H Saji of Japan discovered an **ENSO-like phenomenon in the Indian Ocean** which they named the **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)**.
 - Like ENSO, IOD also has **three phases—positive, negative and neutral**. During the positive phase of IOD, sea surface temperatures are warmer in the western Indian Ocean which gives a boost to monsoon winds.
 - The reverse happens during IOD negative and no gradient is observed during the IOD neutral period.

Somali Jet

- It is a fast moving inter hemispheric cross equatorial flow of air which originates **near**

Mauritius and the northern part of Madagascar in the southern Hemisphere.

- The winds cross the Equator and move along the eastern **coast of Africa through Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia**.
- During May, the **jet moves into the Arabian Sea**, and by **June it reaches the west coast of India**.
- As it travels, it **carries a large amount of moisture (water vapour)** from the ocean.
- When the Somali Jet becomes stronger**, it brings heavier and **more reliable monsoon rainfall to Peninsular India**.

Source: DTE

INDIA'S REGULATORY OVERSIGHT OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR

Context

- The Union Health Ministry has removed the term syrup from **Schedule K of the Drugs Rules 1945** thus requiring cough syrups to be **sold only with a prescription**.

Background

- The step has been taken after **multiple fatalities caused by cough syrups adulterated with industrial solvents** including the death of children across several countries since 2022.
- The measure has raised concerns **regarding pharmaceutical regulation**, public health governance, and India's role in the global healthcare ecosystem.

Pharmaceutical Sector of India

- India stands as the Pharmacy of the World due to its unique **combination of affordable pricing and assured quality**, which has made Indian medicines widely preferred across global markets.
- India hosts the highest number of manufacturing plants approved by the **United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA)** outside the United States of America, reinforcing international confidence in the safety and quality of Indian pharmaceuticals.
 - There are about **500 active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) manufacturers**, accounting for nearly 8 per cent of the global API industry.



Concerns regarding India's Pharmaceutical Regulatory Ecosystem

- **Manufacturing Quality Concerns:** There are instances of contamination and quality lapses highlighting weaknesses in adherence to manufacturing standards.
- **Fragmented Oversight:** Multiple regulatory authorities and varying enforcement standards create inconsistencies in monitoring.
- **Over-the-Counter Drug Culture:** Widespread self-medication increases the risk of irrational and unsafe use of medicines.
- **Regulatory Capacity Constraints:** In India, drug regulation is a dual responsibility shared between the Union and State governments. Many State drug control departments face shortages of inspectors, laboratories, and technical personnel.

Regulation of Drugs in India

- **The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)** headed by the Drugs Controller General (India) is the Central Authority for regulating the quality of drugs marketed in the country under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940** and Rules thereunder.
- **The import, manufacture, distribution and sale of Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Devices** in the country are regulated under the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 & Rules made thereunder i.e. **Drugs Rules, 1945, Medical Devices Rules, 2017, New Drugs & Clinical Trials Rules, 2019** and **Cosmetics Rules, 2020**.
- **The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** is mandated to fix and revise drug prices under the provisions of the **Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 2013**, while monitoring compliance, ensuring the availability of essential medicines, and advising on pharmaceutical policy.
- **Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC):** It oversees the periodic publication of the Indian

Pharmacopoeia, the official compendium of drug standards under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.

- The Pharmacopoeia prescribes standards of identity, purity, and strength for medicines marketed in India.
- The regulatory control over **manufacturing, sale and distribution of drugs** is exercised through a system of **licensing and inspection by State Licensing Authorities (SLAs)** appointed by State Governments, while **regulatory control over drugs** imported into the country is exercised by the Central Government through the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)**.
- **State Health Regulatory Excellence Index (SHRESTH):** A first-of-its-kind national initiative to benchmark and strengthen state drug regulatory systems through a transparent, data-driven framework.

Way Ahead

- Quality assurance should be **integrated throughout the manufacturing process** rather than relying on end-product testing only.
- Public disclosure of **inspection findings and regulatory actions** is necessary to improve accountability.
- There is a need to **use artificial intelligence, data analytics, and digital tracking** systems for regulatory surveillance.

Schedule K of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945

- Schedule K contains a list of certain drugs that are **exempted from some provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945**, subject to specified conditions.
- It facilitates the **sale and distribution of certain categories** of medicines where strict licensing requirements are not necessary.

Source: TH

IS INDIA PRODUCING MORE GRADUATES THAN THE ECONOMY CAN ABSORB?

Context

- India's higher education enrolment grew from **3.42 crore (2014-15)** to **4.46 crore (2022-23)**, yet nearly one in three graduates remains unemployed, raising a fundamental

question about whether India is producing more graduates than its economy can productively absorb.

About

- Over the past decade, **thousands of new colleges and universities** have been established, producing millions of graduates every year.

Expansion of Higher Education Institutions in India (2014–2025)

Institution	2014	2025	Growth
IITs	16	23	+44%
IIMs	13	22	+69%
AIIMS	7	20	+186%
IIITs	9	25	+178%
IISERs	5	7	+40%
Universities	~760	~1,330	+75%
Colleges	~38,500	~52,000	+35%

Source: Ministry of Education

- Total enrolment in higher education has grown** from 3.42 crore in 2014-15 to 4.46 crore in 2022-23.

Challenges Faced by Higher Education Graduates

- Gaps in Job Creation:** In engineering alone, the number of graduates has risen sharply over the past few years while job creation has not kept pace.
- Slowed Hiring of IT Sector:** Earlier, the IT services sector was the principal employer of engineering graduates.
 - Today, hiring by IT services firms has slowed considerably and new opportunities have not grown fast enough to absorb the increasing number of graduates entering the labour market.
- Capital-Intensive Investment:** Recent investments in semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, and technology are capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive; large investment announcements do not proportionately translate into graduate job creation (Economic Survey 2024-25).
- Introduction of AI:** Companies require graduates who can work with AI systems, validate AI-generated outputs, and solve complex problems using technology.

- Universities cannot redesign programmes overnight, and students cannot acquire entirely new competencies instantly.
- Automation in Manufacturing:** Manufacturing is also being transformed by automation, robotics, and Industry 4.0 systems.
 - Historically, a large number of engineers were employed in supervisory and operational roles on factory floors, many of those functions are automated.
 - As a result, the number of engineering jobs generated by manufacturing is not increasing at the pace expected.

Government Initiatives

- The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014** defined youth as individuals aged 15–29 years and identified key areas such as **education, employment, skill development, health, sports, social participation, and empowerment**.
 - The recently proposed National Youth Policy 2025 framework** further underscores emerging priorities such as future-ready skills, entrepreneurship, leadership, civic engagement, digital participation, and sustainable development.
- The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)** promotes experiential and multidisciplinary learning.
 - The National Credit Framework (NCrF)**, adopted by 170 universities, allows students to accumulate credits across academic, skill-based, and experiential learning.
 - The Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR ID)** accumulates academic and skill credits earned throughout a student's learning journey.
- SWAYAM** offers over 18,580 courses, recording more than 6.1 crore enrolments and 53.7 lakh certifications.
 - SWAYAM PRABHA, PM e-VIDYA, and DIKSHA have further widened learning access through television, radio, digital content, and e-resources.
- The Atal Innovation Mission** has established over 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs, supporting the development of over 16 lakh projects in emerging technologies.
- National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS):** Launched in 2016, the scheme is currently being implemented in its second phase, NAPS 2.0.

- ♦ The programme promotes apprenticeship training by providing partial stipend support to apprentices.
- ♦ Apprenticeship remains a key pillar for “earn while you learn” and industry-centric skill development.
- **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs):** ITIs are the backbone of long-term vocational education in India and provide a steady flow of skilled personnel to the industry.
 - ♦ Over the past 12 years, the Government ensured this network underwent a massive expansion and modernisation.
- **SOAR (Skilling for AI Readiness):** Launched in 2025, SOAR introduces Artificial Intelligence awareness and foundational AI skills to school students from Classes 6 to 12.
 - ♦ It also equips educators to integrate AI concepts into learning. The programme offers three 15-hour modules for students.
- **Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS) 2024:** It is a flagship transformative initiative to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements.
 - ♦ This initiative aims to provide structured, paid internship opportunities to youth across the country.
- **Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) 2023:** It serves as a unified Digital Public Infrastructure platform for skilling, employment, apprenticeship, and entrepreneurship.
 - ♦ It integrates learners, training providers, employers, and Government programmes on a single digital platform.

Way Ahead

- India must significantly increase **investment in research and development**.
- **Industry and academia** must work together much more closely.
- India needs a **stronger entrepreneurship ecosystem** that encourages innovation and supports risk-taking.
- India must continue building indigenous capabilities in design, engineering and advanced manufacturing.
- The opportunities are real, particularly in sectors such as defence and aerospace.
 - ♦ The challenge is ensuring that **education, industry and policy move in the same direction**.

Source: TH

STATE FINANCES REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL (CAG)

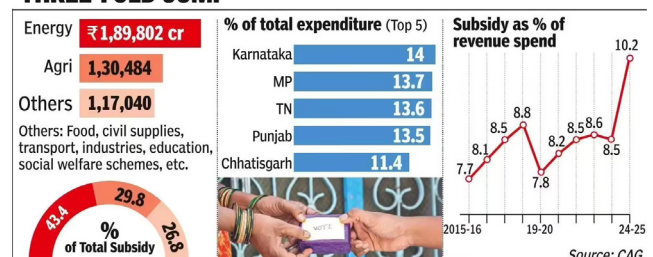
Context

- Recently the **State Finances 2024-25 Report** of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has brought attention to a significant trend in India's fiscal landscape.

Key Findings of the CAG Report

- **Rise in Subsidy Expenditure:** The Subsidy expenditure rose to **10.2%** of States revenue expenditure in FY 2024-25, compared to the post-pandemic average of around **8.5%**.
 - ♦ State governments spent nearly **₹4.4 lakh crore** on subsidies in **FY 2024-25**, almost three times the level recorded a decade ago.
 - ♦ **Karnataka** recorded the highest subsidy burden, with subsidies accounting for **14.01%** of total expenditure.
- **States with Highest Subsidy Burden:** Karnataka recorded the highest subsidy burden, with subsidies accounting for **14.01%** of total expenditure.
 - ♦ Other States with high subsidy expenditure include **Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan**.
- **Dominance of Revenue Expenditure:** Revenue expenditure accounted for more than **83%** of total State expenditure.
 - ♦ Social and economic services together constituted nearly two-thirds of total expenditure, reflecting the growing emphasis on welfare spending.
- **Sector-wise Distribution of Subsidies:** Energy subsidies, particularly **electricity** subsidies, constituted the largest share of total subsidies.
 - ♦ Agricultural support, including **power and irrigation subsidies**, remained another major component of State expenditure.

THREE-FOLD JUMP



Concerns Raised by the CAG

- **Shrinking Fiscal Space:** A large share of revenue receipts is being absorbed by mandatory spending obligations, leaving **limited resources for new developmental initiatives.**
- **Crowding Out Capital Expenditure:** Increasing expenditure on subsidies constrain investment in infrastructure, irrigation, education, healthcare, and other productive assets.
- **Sustainability Risks:** Persistent expansion of subsidy programmes without corresponding growth in revenue leads to higher fiscal deficits and debt levels.

Way Ahead

- The CAG emphasized the need for States to **balance welfare spending** with developmental expenditure.
- The Subsidy programmes should be periodically reviewed to ensure efficiency, proper targeting, and fiscal prudence.

Source: TOI

NEWS IN SHORT

RUNG COMMUNITY

Context

- The **Rung community in Uttarakhand** opposed the installation of a Shivling and near Om Parvat citing their **tradition of nature worship.**

About

- Rung is an **indigenous community** residing primarily in the border valleys of **Dharchula in Pithoragarh district** and parts of **Nepal**, known for their distinct cultural traditions of nature worship.
 - ♦ They live mainly in the valleys of **Vyans Valley, Darma Valley and Chaudans Valley.**
- They Revere natural manifestations of **Lord Shiva**, including sacred mountains such as **Om Parvat and Adi Kailash.**

Source: TH

NPCI UNVEILS DRUNIX PLATFORM

Context

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) rolled out Drunix, an open-source blockchain platform, to help companies build

and **scale tokenisation platforms, digital asset ecosystems, multi-organisation networks.**

About

- Drunix is a high-performance **distributed ledger platform** designed for enterprise-scale and public infrastructure adoption.
- Drunix is built as an enhanced fork of **Hyperledger Fabric.**
 - ♦ Hyperledger Fabric is an open-source enterprise blockchain framework, developed under the umbrella of the **Linux Foundation** and widely used for permissioned blockchain applications.

What is Tokenization?

- Tokenization is the process of **converting ownership rights or assets** into digital tokens on a blockchain.
- These assets include **financial securities, real estate, commodities, digital currencies and identity credentials.**

Source: BS

SHE-BOX 2.0 PORTAL UNDER MISSION SHAKTI

Context

- The government has highlighted the role of the **SHe-Box 2.0 Portal** under Mission Shakti in strengthening the implementation of workplace sexual harassment laws and ensuring a safer work environment for women.

What is SHe-Box?

- The **Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box)** portal has been developed to operationalise the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SH Act).
- The portal was launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).**
- **SHe-Box 2.0** was launched in **2024**, providing a secure, confidential and user-friendly interface that enables women to report incidents without fear of stigma or retaliation.
 - ♦ It provides single-window access for women across all **organised, unorganised, public and private sectors** to register and track complaints
 - ♦ The portal is available in **22 languages**, including **Hindi and English.**

About Mission Shakti

- It is a scheme in mission mode aimed at strengthening interventions for **women safety, security & empowerment**.
- Mission Shakti has two sub-schemes - 'Sambal' and 'Samarthya'.
 - ♦ In the Sambal subscheme, which is for safety and security of women, the existing scheme of **One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)** have been included with modifications and a new component of **Nari Adalat - women collective has been added**.

Source: AIR

DARK WEB

Context

- The Union government submitted before the Delhi High Court that the messaging **platform Telegram has evolved into the "new dark web"**.

About

- It argued that **its architecture and privacy features** have made it a **preferred tool for cybercriminals, fraud networks, extremist and terror groups**, and operators involved in examination paper leaks.
- The government's submissions relied heavily on an **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) assessment** that the platform is a growing hub for illicit online activity.

Dark Web

- **The dark web** is the **part of the internet** where users **can access unindexed web content anonymously** through special web browsers like The Onion Router (Tor).
- **Origin:** It can be traced to researchers and scientists in the **U.S. Naval Research Laboratory in 2002**.
 - ♦ They recognized how easily digital activity and communication could be monitored, intercepted, and exploited.
 - ♦ It grew out of a need for a more secure communications channel in the intelligence community.
- **Concerns:** The dark web is unregulated, meaning that it is run and upheld by a vast network of individuals around the world.

- ♦ This operating model is what makes the dark web such a valuable and appealing tool for cybercriminals and other people with questionable intentions.

Open web vs deep web vs dark web



Source: TH

PRADHAN MANTRI VIKSIT BHARAT ROJGAR YOJANA (PM-VBRY)

Context

- The Prime Minister will disburse ₹2,400 crore worth incentives under the **Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)**.

About PM-VBRY

- It is a **flagship government program** launched in **2025** and implemented by the **Ministry of Labour & Employment**.
- **Aim:** To promote employment generation, enhance employability, and strengthen social security across all sectors with a **particular focus on the manufacturing sector**.
- The scheme aims to **create more than 3.5 crore meaningful jobs across the country**.

- **Features:**
 - ♦ First-time employees are eligible for incentives of up to ₹15,000.
 - ♦ For the employer's side, the government offers a reward of up to ₹3,000 per new employee after six months of stable employment.
- The initiative is expected to encourage greater participation in the formal workforce and contribute to sustained long-term economic growth.

Source: TH

QS RANKINGS 2027

Context

- Recently **QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Ranking 2027**, was released ranking Higher education institutions across the world.

Major Findings

- It evaluated more than **1,500 institutions across 106 countries and territories.**
 - ♦ It features **52 Indian universities**, making **India the world's fifth most represented higher education system.**
- **IIT Delhi** remains India's highest-ranked institution at 118th globally, while IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay and IIT Madras are among the world's Top 200 universities.
- **Top Ranked Institutions Globally: The US' Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** has retained the top position for the 15th consecutive year.
 - ♦ **UK's Imperial College London and US' Stanford University** are joint second followed by **UK's University of Oxford.**
 - ♦ **The top ranked Chinese institution is Peking University at 13th position, the top ranked German one is Technical University of Munich at 25th.**
- **Concerns:** The report noted that Indian universities continue to face challenges in attracting international students and faculty, despite making significant gains in research impact and graduate employability.

QS Rankings

- **QS was founded in 1990** and **headquartered in London**, QS specialises in providing data,

research and consulting services to the international higher education sector.

- QS Rankings, **established in 2004**, is the most reputed Ranking among the major global university rankings and offers an impartial assessment of institutions.
- **It assesses institutions across 10 key indicators** including academic reputation, employment outcomes, international faculty ratio, international research network, international student diversity, faculty-student ratio and sustainability.

Source: AIR

PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJANA-URBAN 2.0

Context

- The Union Government has approved over 2.13 lakh additional houses for eligible urban poor families under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0).**

About PMAY-U

- It is a flagship scheme of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, under which central assistance of up to ₹2.50 lakh crore is provided.
- It was launched in **September 2024** as an upgraded and expanded version of **PMAY-U**, which was launched on **25 June 2015.**
- It is open to families belonging to the Economically Weaker Section (EWS), Low Income Group (LIG), and Middle Income Group (MIG) segments who do not own a pucca house anywhere in the country.
- The income criteria for eligibility are as follows:
 - ♦ EWS households: Annual income up to ₹3 lakh.
 - ♦ LIG households: Annual income from ₹3 lakh to ₹6 lakh.
 - ♦ MIG households: Annual income from ₹6 lakh to ₹9 lakh.
- The cost of house construction is shared among the **Centre, States/UTs, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), and beneficiaries**, with the cost-sharing pattern varying across regions.
- PMAY-U and PMAY-U 2.0 together have sanctioned over **1.27 crore houses** across the country.

Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G)

- **Launched by:** Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).
- **Background:** Introduced on 1 April 2016 by restructuring the erstwhile **Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)** to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to rural households.

Source: AIR

EXERCISE KHAAN QUEST 2026**Context**

- The **Exercise KHAAN QUEST** is going to be conducted from 20 June to 3 July at the Five Hills Training Area in Ulaanbaatar.

About

- The exercise first started as a bilateral event between **USA and Mongolian** Armed Forces in the year **2003**.
- Subsequently, from the year **2006** onwards the exercise graduated to a **Multinational Peacekeeping Exercise** with the current year being the **23rd iteration**.
- The exercise aims to enhance interoperability and cooperation among participating militaries in peace support operations under **Chapter VII** of the United Nations Charter.

Source: AIR

