

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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MARITIME PIRACY AND SECURITY

Context

- The recent response of the Indian Navy to piracy attempts in the Gulf of Aden brings the issue of maritime piracy to fore.

What is Maritime Piracy?

- The **1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** defines piracy to include **any acts of violence, detention or destruction committed for private ends against persons** or property on board a ship on the high seas or outside the jurisdiction of any state.
- Though, the **Piracy differs from armed robbery at sea** which occurs within a country's territorial waters and falls under the jurisdiction of the coastal State.



Reasons of Maritime Piracy

- Land-Based Socio-Economic Drivers:** Poverty, unemployment, livelihood insecurity and declining marine resources drive coastal communities towards piracy as an alternative source of income.
- Political and Governance Failures:** Political instability, corruption, and inadequate maritime law enforcement create conditions that enable piracy to flourish.
- Geographic and Traffic Vulnerabilities:** Busy international shipping routes, strategic chokepoints & vast maritime areas with limited surveillance provide attractive and accessible targets for pirates.
- Transnational Organized Crime:** Well-organized criminal networks facilitate piracy by providing financing, logistics, weapons, intelligence and links with other illicit activities such as smuggling and human trafficking.

Importance of Maritime Security for India

- Nearly **95% of India's trade by volume** and around **70% by value** is carried through maritime transport.
- Also more than **80% of India's crude oil imports** are transported through sea routes.
- India has a coastline of over **11,098 km**, an **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** of about **2.37 million sq. km**, and island territories located near critical sea lanes.
- Secure maritime routes are necessary for India's trade, energy security, blue economy, and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean Region.

India's Maritime Security Architecture

- Role of Indian Navy:** Since 2008, Indian Navy has deployed units in the **Gulf of Aden and East coast** of Africa towards antipiracy patrols.
 - Bilateral/multilateral **maritime exercises, Joint Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surveillance, Coordinated Patrols (CORPATs)** with Friendly Foreign Countries are being undertaken by the Navy.
- National Maritime Domain Awareness (NMDA)** integrates information from multiple agencies for real-time monitoring of maritime activities.
- The Government of India has established the **Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** which has linkages with 25 partner nations and over 40 international multinational organisations for real-time information exchange towards enhancing maritime security.

- Indian Coast Guard** is responsible for coastal security, search and rescue, pollution response, and anti-smuggling operations within India's maritime zones.

Government Initiatives

- Maritime Anti-Piracy Act, 2022:** It provides a legal framework to prosecute pirates regardless of nationality. The Indian authorities can seize pirate ships and prosecute offences committed on the high seas.
- Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR):** It promotes regional cooperation, maritime security, and capacity building in the Indian Ocean.
- Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative:** It leads to collaboration on maritime security, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable use of marine resources.

International Initiatives

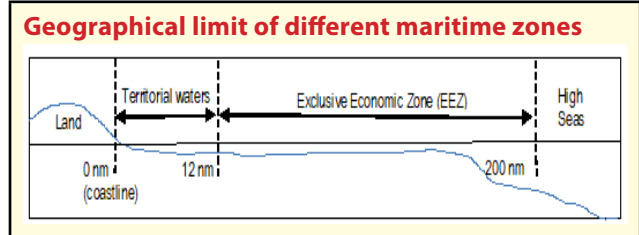
- **UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea):** Provides the legal definition of piracy and allows states to seize pirate ships and arrest crews on the high seas.
- **IMO (International Maritime Organization):** Develops global regulations to manage maritime threats and secure global trade.
- **Djibouti Code of Conduct:** Regional framework for combating piracy in the Western Indian Ocean.
- **Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP):** Formalised in 2004, it is the first and only regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation to suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

What are the Challenges?

- **Vast maritime areas** make continuous surveillance and rapid response to maritime threats difficult.
- **Emerging use of drones** and advanced technologies by pirates and criminal groups has made maritime crimes more sophisticated.
- **Coordination among multiple national agencies** and international jurisdictions becomes challenging due to overlapping mandates and legal complexities.
- **Rising geopolitical rivalries** and regional conflicts increase maritime insecurity.

Gulf of Aden

- It is a deepwater gulf located between **Yemen** on the **Arabian Peninsula** and Somalia in the Horn of Africa.
- It connects the **Arabian Sea** to the **Red Sea** through the **Bab el-Mandeb Strait**.



Source: TH, PIB

SUPREME COURT WARNS AGAINST UNREGULATED AI USE IN JUDICIAL RULINGS

Context

- The Supreme Court set aside an National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) judgment, as it found that the **tribunal had relied on non-existent, fake and hallucinated judgments/ precedents generated using AI**.

About

- The case underscored **wider concerns about the use of AI in legal adjudication** and stressed that although AI can assist the process, adjudication must remain under the absolute control of human decision-makers.
- It directed that the apex bar body must take up this issue with utmost seriousness and **prescribe a guiding principle to prevent such occurrences**, along with the disciplinary action.

Recent SC Draft Regulations on AI Use in Judiciary

- **It permits the use of AI for administrative functions** such as case management, preparation of cause lists, scheduling of hearings, transcription of court proceedings and translation of judgments.
- **AI systems cannot be used for "risk scoring"** in court processes, this includes assessing flight risk, predicting recidivism, evaluating bail eligibility, or determining the credibility of parties or witnesses.
- The processing of personal data through AI systems **shall be governed by the provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**.
- **AI systems must not perpetuate bias** on grounds of race, religion, caste, sex, gender, disability, language, economic status, or any other ground prohibited under the Constitution.
- **AI-assisted judicial systems should not "widen digital divides"** and must remain accessible to all stakeholders.

- To supervise the adoption of AI in the judiciary, it proposes the **creation of a full-time “apex body” at the Supreme Court.**

Use of AI in India's Justice System

- In the Supreme Court, High Courts, National Informatics Centre (NIC) **AI tools are now assisting various functions such as:**
 - Transcription of oral arguments,
 - Translation of judgments,
 - Identification of defects in e-filing,
 - Legal research, and
 - Metadata extraction.



- Over the past decade, **courts have moved from basic computerisation to nationwide digital platforms**, real-time data systems, virtual courts and multilingual judgment access.
- Latest technologies** like AI and its subsets Machine Learning (ML), Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Natural Language Processing (NLP) are being used in the e-Courts software applications developed under the eCourts Project.

Significance of Use of AI in Judiciary in India

- Backlog of Cases:** India's judicial system faces a backlog cases, undermining public trust in timely justice.
 - AI can streamline case management, reduce backlog, and speed up judicial processes.
- Overcrowding in Prisons:** Indian prisons have been **housing more inmates than their capacity** for decades now, AI can streamline the complaint registration process, track investigations, flag necessary actions, and assess investigation quality.
- Translation and Accessibility:** India has **22 scheduled languages** and hundreds of dialects. AI-powered translation can make judicial

documents and judgments accessible across linguistic barriers.

- ♦ **The SUVAAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software) project** has translated thousands of judgments into regional languages.
- **Enhanced Accuracy:** AI can prevent neglect of crucial evidence and ensure a more meticulous and reliable criminal justice process.
- **Improving Access to Justice:** AI chatbots and virtual assistants can help litigants, especially those without legal representation, navigate procedures, track case status, and file petitions.

Concerns/Challenges

- **Bias and Dependence:** AI-enabled legal research may show search bias, excluding relevant precedents.
 - ♦ Over-reliance risks reducing adjudication to rule-based outputs, sidelining nuanced human judgment.
- **Data Protection and Privacy:** Absence of clear frameworks on storage and use of judicial data raises concerns.
- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Courts face uneven Internet connectivity, outdated hardware, and limited technical expertise.
- **Ethical Concerns:** The use of AI in sensitive areas like sentencing and parole decisions raises moral and ethical questions about fairness and justice.
- **Exclusion of Human Insight:** AI may overlook nuanced factors in cases that require human empathy and judgment.

Way Ahead

- A balanced approach must be taken to ensure AI tools respect privacy, civil liberties, and ethical standards, while preventing misuse.
- By leveraging AI, India's criminal justice system can become more efficient, accessible, and just, while ensuring safeguards are in place to address any challenges.

Source: TH

I-2SEA : SUBMARINE CABLE SYSTEM

In News

- A consortium comprising tech giant Microsoft, Singtel, Tata Communications and AI connectivity platform Lightstorm will build a submarine cable system connecting India, Malaysia and Singapore.

I-2SEA: the cable system

- **Route and Design:** It will link India's east coast, home to the fastest-growing AI and hyperscaler data centre clusters in Hyderabad and Chennai, directly to Singapore, which is the region's cloud interconnect and AI hub as well as Malaysia's emerging data centre corridor in Kuala Lumpur.
 - ♦ It will have dual landings in India, with the one at Machilipatnam providing shortest subsea access to Hyderabad and the other at a new diverse landing location in South Chennai.
- **Purpose:** It is designed to cater to the rapidly growing demand from hyperscalers, GPU infrastructure providers and enterprises running AI training and inference workloads across the India–Southeast Asia corridor.
 - ♦ To serve high demand AI workloads, particularly in between major data centre hubs in Hyderabad, Chennai and Singapore.
- **Timeline:** I-2SEA is targeted to be ready-for-service in 2029 and the estimated length of the high-capacity cable is 3,600 km from Singapore to Machilipatnam with onward connectivity to Hyderabad.
 - ♦ It is expected to deliver the fastest transmission on the Singapore/Malaysia–Hyderabad corridor, which is the most strategically critical city pair for AI workloads in the region

Undersea cables (Submarine Cable)

- They are the main link connecting the world's internet networks.
- They connect internet service providers and telecom operators everywhere with those in other countries.
- These thick, well-protected fibre optic cables run along the ocean floor, and carry huge amounts of data at high speed.
- They hit the coast and connect with landing stations which connect them to inland networks.
- They are giving internet access to users, along with terrestrial cables and towers.

Benefits

- **Growth for digital economy:** Submarine cables are the backbone of India's rapidly growing

digital economy, efficiently ferrying data for the country's booming fintech, e-commerce and IT service exports.

- ♦ High speed, high capacity pipelines are required for real-time applications like financial trading and cloud-to-cloud synchronisation.
- **The AI & Data Center Boom:** Distributed data center clusters are crucial for large-scale AI training and cloud networks.
 - ♦ These facilities require skyrocketing bandwidth and next generation cables are required to handle this.
- **Domestic and Regional Inclusivity:** Indigenous projects like the Chennai-Andaman & Nicobar Island (CANI) cable and the Kochi-Lakshadweep Island (KLI) cable have brought remote island territories into the high-speed broadband fold, improving national security and local economic integration.
- **Geopolitical and Maritime Influence:** Anchoring of major international consortiums is positioning India as a critical digital transit hub in the Indo-Pacific and the bridge between Europe, West Asia and Southeast Asia.

Vulnerabilities and Challenges

- **Damage Vulnerability:** Undersea cables are vulnerable to damage from fishing trawlers, ship anchors, earthquakes, underwater landslides, and extreme weather events.
 - ♦ Most faults occur in shallow coastal waters where the cables are most exposed to human activity.
- **Geopolitical Choke Points and the Sabotage :** A significant number of the undersea cables pass through strategic maritime chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb.
 - ♦ Regional conflicts, geopolitical tensions or even sabotage in these areas can heavily disrupt global internet connectivity, as recent events in the Red Sea show.
- **Heavy Landing Concentration :** India has a very long coastline, but the risk of geographic concentration is high.
 - ♦ Any localised natural disaster, regulatory choke or maritime mishap there could cut off a huge chunk of India's Internet bandwidth.
- **Regulatory Hurdles and Delays :** Operators require clearances from various ministries (Telecom, Home Affairs, Defence, Environment and Fisheries).

- ♦ Such stringent norms of ownership and security make it a tough jurisdiction for a quick private roll-out
- **Lack of repair capability:** India lacks domestic undersea cable repair capability and relies on foreign repair ships, leading to repair delays caused by transit time, permits, and clearances.

Suggestions

- India must enact legislation to declare “**Cable Protection Zones**” along its coastline taking the best practices of the world, as adopted by countries such as Australia and Singapore.
- Commercial fishing, dredging and anchoring close to critical underwater pipelines should be banned in these areas.
- India needs to develop alternative coastal landing stations, away from Mumbai and Chennai.
 - ♦ Hubs in Visakhapatnam (east coast) and Dhuvaran (west coast) need to be fast-tracked to provide critical redundancy and route-diversity.
- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) should bring in a single-window clearance mechanism for submarine cable deployment to streamline bureaucracy.
- Easing permissions would attract huge foreign direct investments from global cloud and AI hyperscalers such as Google, Meta and Microsoft.
- Developing home-grown cable laying and repair vessels is an economic and national security imperative.
- the Indian Navy and Coast Guard need to incorporate undersea cable monitoring into their maritime domain awareness systems and employ Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs) to guard against hostile interference

Source :TH

CENTRE EXPANDS CENTRALLY LICENSE APPROVING AUTHORITY (CLAA) FRAMEWORK

Context

- The Central Government has amended the **Drugs Rules, 1945** to bring **Cell or Stem Cell derived products, Gene therapeutic products and Xenografts** under the ambit of the **Centrally License Approving Authority (CLAA) framework**.

About

- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, certain specified categories of **critical drugs and biological products** are under the **joint regulatory supervision of the Central and State regulators**.
 - ♦ These include **vaccines, large volume parenterals (IV solutions > 100 ml) and r-DNA based medicines**.
 - ♦ This set is being **expanded** with this amendment to cover additional emerging technologies.
- **Cell or Stem Cell derived products** e.g. such as stem cell-based regenerative treatments, CAR-T cell therapies have seen increasing use in treatment of blood cancers.
- **Gene therapeutic products** such as gene replacement and gene editing products have found use in treating genetic disorders and various types of cancers.
- **Xenografts** are animal tissue-derived products such as heart valves which can be transplanted into humans. These have use in cardiology and orthopedics.
 - ♦ Since **these technologies represent highly complex, specialized and rapidly evolving areas** of medical science, they **need enhanced regulatory scrutiny to ensure patient safety**.
- **Significance:** The inclusion of these products under the CLAA framework will facilitate a system of **joint oversight by the Central and State Licensing Authorities**, thereby ensuring uniformity in regulatory standards across the country.

The CLAA Framework in India

- It is a **regulatory mechanism under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945**, through which the **Central Government exercises oversight** over the licensing of **certain critical categories of drugs**.
- The framework is administered by the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- **Objective:**
 - ♦ To ensure uniform national standards in the manufacture of critical drugs.
 - ♦ To strengthen quality control, safety, and regulatory oversight.

- ♦ To prevent variations in licensing practices among different States.
- **How the CLAA Framework Works?**
 - ♦ The manufacturer submits a licence application to the State Licensing Authority (SLA).
 - ♦ The SLA inspects the manufacturing facility and examines compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
 - ♦ If the application is satisfactory, the SLA forwards its recommendation to the CLAA.
 - ♦ The CLAA independently evaluates the proposal and grants or rejects the licence.
- **Drugs Covered under the CLAA Framework:** The Central Government specifies the categories of drugs requiring CLAA approval. These generally include:
 - ♦ Blood and blood products, vaccines, intravenous (IV) fluids/Large Volume Parenterals (LVPs), recombinant DNA (r-DNA) products and other critical biological products notified by the Government.
- **Role of CDSCO:**
 - ♦ It functions as the Central License Approving Authority.
 - ♦ Approves licences for specified critical drugs.
 - ♦ Regulates imports, new drug approvals, and clinical trials.
 - ♦ Coordinates with State Drug Control Organisations to ensure uniform enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT

SIMLA AGREEMENT

Context

- The Simla Agreement completed 54 years on 2 July 2026.

About

- The Simla Agreement was signed in 1972 to establish lasting peace between India and Pakistan post the **1971 war**.
- The agreement was signed between Indian Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi** and Pakistani President **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto**.

Key Provisions of Simla Agreement

- **Peaceful resolution:** Both countries agreed to resolve disputes through bilateral negotiations without involving third parties.
- **Line of Control (LoC):** The ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir was redefined as the Line of Control, with both sides committing not to alter it unilaterally.
- **Release of prisoners:** India agreed to release Pakistani prisoners of war, and Pakistan committed to normalising relations and recognising the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

Source: IE, IT

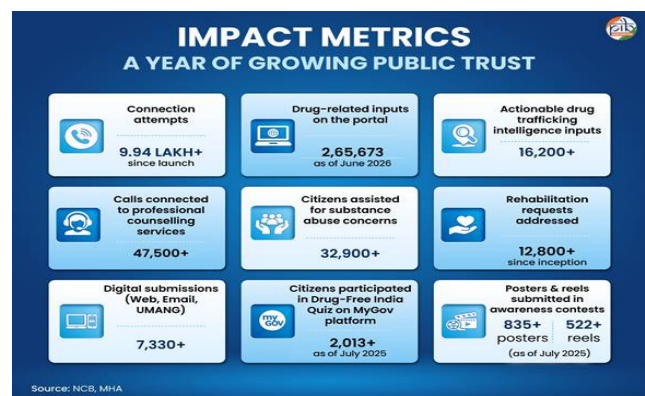
MANAS INITIATIVE

Context

- The National Narcotics Helpline **MANAS** is strengthening India's fight against drug abuse by providing a technology-driven platform for reporting drug-related activities and accessing rehabilitation services.

About

- **MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asoochna Kendra)** was launched in **2024** under the aegis of the **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Ministry of Home Affairs**, in collaboration with the **Digital India Corporation (DIC)**.
- Built as a secure, technology-driven platform, MANAS enables citizens to report drug-related activities, seek counselling, and access rehabilitation support at any time.
- The platform is accessible through the national helpline number **1933**, the official portal, email and the **UMANG app**.
- MANAS brings together the vision of **Digital India** and the mission of a **Nasha Mukh Bharat**.



India's War Against The Drug Menace

- **Constitutional Basis:** Article 47 states that the State not to promote consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs that are injurious to health except for medicinal purposes.
- **Global Commitment:** India is a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Drug Trafficking.
- **Legal Frameworks:** The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, NDPS Act, 1985, PITNDPS Act, 1988.
- **Key Initiatives:** NIDAAN Portal for monitoring drug cases; Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan for awareness, prevention and rehabilitation.

Source: PIB

GAIT ANALYSIS

Context

- In a recent murder case in Pune, investigators are using forensic gait analysis and AI-assisted comparison of CCTV footage to aid the investigation.

What is Gait Analysis?

- **Gait analysis** is the scientific study of how a human walks or runs.
- Walking (or running) is a complex activity where the body has to coordinate continuously between **muscles, bones, and the nervous system**.
- **Gait analysis breaks down** these activities to piece together how a particular person walks.

What is a Gait Cycle?

- A gait cycle is the **sequence of movements** beginning when one foot touches the ground and ending when the same foot contacts the ground again. The cycle has two broad phases.
 - ♦ **In the stance phase**, the foot is in contact with the ground and ends when the toes push off. The body absorbs the shock of hitting the surface while supporting the whole body weight in this phase.
 - ♦ **In the swing phase**, the foot is off the ground but also moving towards it, to take the next step. In this duration, the body's focus is on ensuring the toes don't drag on the floor while positioning the foot for its landing.

Applications of Gait Analysis

- **Clinical Study:** Gait analysis can be used to understand why someone is in pain or how

a specific medical condition is progressing. Sportspeople use it to understand how they can run faster.

- **Forensic gait analysis** has been used to assess whether the way a person walks, as recorded live or seen on CCTV footage, is consistent with that of a known individual.
- It is used to identify abnormalities in an individual's pattern of movement. Doctors use it to manage symptoms in people with **cerebral palsy and Parkinson's disease** and as part of post-stroke care.

Source: TH

MECON ACHIEVES MINIRATNA CATEGORY-I STATUS

Context

- The Ministry of Steel has approved the grant of Miniratna Category-I status to MECON Limited.

About MECON Limited

- MECON Limited, established in **1959** and headquartered in **Ranchi**, is one of India's premier engineering, consultancy, project management and contracting organizations.
- It is a **Schedule 'A'** Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Steel**.

What is Miniratna Status?

- Miniratna status is granted by the **Department of Public Enterprises (DPE)** to eligible profit-making Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).
- Introduced in **October 1997**, the status aims to provide greater financial and operational autonomy to efficient CPSEs.
- It is classified into **Miniratna Category-I and Miniratna Category-II** based on their financial performance.

Eligibility Criteria for Miniratna Status

- **Category I CPSEs** should have made profit in the last three years continuously, the pre-tax profit should have been **Rs. 30 crore or more in at least one of the three years** and should have a positive net worth.
- **Category II CPSEs** should have made profit for the last three years continuously and should have a positive net worth.

Source: PIB

RBI'S UPPER LAYER NBFCs

In News

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reinstated the definition of "indirect receipt of public funds" in its NBFC master directions, effective July 1, 2026.

Do you know?

- The RBI had originally defined indirect receipt of public funds in a circular issued on April 2026 as "funds received not directly but through associates and group entities which have access to public funds."
- The RBI replaced the previous methodology to determine NBFC-UL with a simple criterion that only NBFCs with assets of Rs 1 lakh crore or more will be classified as NBFC-UL.
 - Under RBI rules, an NBFC-UL is required to list on a stock exchange within three years of being notified and comply with stricter governance and disclosure norms.

Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)

- It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 or 2013 and whose principal business is that of financial activities like loans and advances, acquisition of shares/stocks/bonds/debentures/securities issued by Government or local authority or other marketable securities of a like nature, leasing, hire-purchase etc.
- However, it does not include companies whose main business is agriculture, industrial activity, trading of goods (other than securities), provision of general services or real estate activities such as sale, purchase or construction of immovable property.

Requirements for registration with the Reserve Bank

- A company needs to be incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 or 2013 to start an NBFC business, and needs to meet the eligibility norms of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- It should have a minimum net owned fund of ₹10 crore but there are different thresholds for specialised NBFCs based on their category.
- The company will also be required to register with the RBI's PRAVAAH portal and submit all the necessary documents as per the RBI's stipulation.

Major differences between banks and NBFCs

- NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits.
- NBFCs do not form part of the payment and settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on itself.

- DICGC is not available to depositors of deposit taking NBFCs

Source :IE

HASDEO-ARAND FORESTS

Context

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has granted environmental clearance for mining in the **Kente Extension Integrated Coal Block in Chhattisgarh's Hasdeo-Arand forests.**

Hasdeo-Arand forests

- The Hasdeo-Arand forests, spread across **Chhattisgarh's Korba, Surguja, and Surajpur districts**, cover about 1.7 lakh hectares and are considered the **Green Lungs of Central India.**
- They are home to around 640 plant species and nine schedule-1 wildlife species, which are accorded highest legal protection.
- It is also the **catchment area of the Hasdeo river**, the largest tributary of the Mahanadi.

Geographical Distribution of Coal in India

- Gondwana Coals:** About **98% of total coal** in India is based on Gondwana time;
 - Majorly found in **Chhattisgarh**, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh etc.
 - Major Gondwana Coal Mining Centres:**
 - Damodar Valley:** Daktonganj, Bokaro, Jharia, Dhanbad, Raniganj, Durgapur
 - Son Valley:** Associated with North Koel river, Singrauli
 - Mahanadi Valley:** Associated with rivers like **Hasdeo**, Ib, South Koel etc, Korba, Jhilmil, Talcher
 - Godavari and Wardha Valley:** Singreni, Kotagundam (Telangana), Kamptee Valley (Nagpur, Maharashtra).

Source: IE

PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRIYA BAL PURASKAR AWARDS (PMRBP) 2026

In News

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development invited nominations for the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar Awards (PMRBP) 2026.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar Awards (PMRBP)

- It is India's premier national honour dedicated to celebrating the exceptional resilience, courage, creativity, and indomitable spirit of young citizens.
 - ♦ It started in 2019.
- It is conferred annually by the President of India at a special ceremony in New Delhi on Veer Bal Diwas, observed on 26th December.
- The award recognizes outstanding achievements across six distinct categories: Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Art and Culture, and Science and Technology.
- It recognises the extraordinary achievements of children aged 5 to 18 years.
 - ♦ Any citizen, school, institution, or organisation can nominate candidates they deem deserving.
 - ♦ Children may also apply through self-nomination.

- The awards **include** a medal, a certificate and a citation.

Veer Bal Diwas

- The Government observes Veer Bal Diwas on 26th December every year. The day remembers Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, sons of the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh.
- Zorawar and Fateh Singh were aged 9 and 7 respectively. On December 26, 1704, they were martyred for refusing to abandon their faith under coercion.
- Their martyrdom represents courage, moral strength and devotion even at a young age. Their sacrifice and bravery in the face of adversity were extraordinary, and they continue to inspire children today.

Source :PIB

