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EU AI TRANSPARENCY CODE

Context

- From August 2, the **EU mandates labels for AI-generated content** to **boost transparency online.**

About

- **Aim:** To ensure **transparency** and **enable human users to distinguish manipulated content online.**
- It falls under the purview of **Article 50 of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA).**
    - This Act **sets a framework** for the **use and supply of AI systems** within the **bloc with a risk-based categorisation.**
    - The **'Code of Practice on Transparency of AI-Generated Content'** stipulates **certain obligations for AI developers and providers** to maintain the integrity of the information ecosystem.

Major Highlights

- **Scope of Labeling the Content:** Two broad categories of online content: **deepfakes and manipulated text.**
    - **Deepfakes** refer to images, audio, or video resembling existing persons, places, or events that are generated (or manipulated) with AI and would appear to a human user as authentic.
    - **Manipulated text** includes that published to pass information to the public that has not undergone human review.
    - The code requires AI system developers and content providers **to display prominent, distinguishable signs** that such products are artificial.
- **Exceptions Under the Code:** Deepfakes that are part of products that are evidently **artistic, satirical, or fictional**.
    - **Content authorised by law** to detect, prevent, investigate, or prosecute criminal offences.
    - **AI-generated text that has undergone human review** or is **under editorial control** with a legally liable person holding responsibility for it.
- **Labeling of the Content: The EU has listed out three kinds of icons:**
    - a **basic 'AI' icon** if the technology is merely involved in the creation of a product;
    - an **'AI generated' icon** for those entirely produced by the technology with no human element involved except prompts;
    - and **an 'AI modified' icon** for pre-existing, human-made content that has undergone manipulation with AI tools.

How the Code Differs from India?

- **The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in 2026,** notified an **amendment to the IT Rules, 2021,** that required **users and social media platforms** to label synthetically generated information (SGI) prominently for users to see.
    - **The EU code requires developers of AI systems** to include the label, India puts focus on social media, with the **onus on users for the disclosure** while **relying on the platforms to enforce it.**
- EU code seeks **to bring about accountability from AI systems** to improve responsible content generation.
    - India has sought **to regulate the final product** with provisions for platforms to take down content that goes against the IT Rules.
- EU has laid down **specific exemptions for creative content** and put trust on human review, **Indian rules are more generic and don't provide such leeway.**

Conclusion

- As AI tools become a part of how people build, imagine, and share, it's important that people can **understand where content comes from and interpret it with confidence.**

Source: TH

SC RESTRICTS 'RETROSPECTIVE' ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES

Context

- The Supreme Court **quashed** a 2021 Office Memorandum (OM) granting **ex post facto environmental clearances to infrastructure projects.**

About

- **The 2021 Office Memorandum (OM)** allowed **retrospective approval for projects** that had already commenced construction **without environment clearances (ECs).**

- The court held that **ex-post facto ECs cannot be created through an OM,** but recognised that the government may, in exceptional circumstances and in public interest, **provide such a mechanism through a statutory notification** issued under delegated legislative powers.
- The judgment has sought to **strike a middle path in its evolving environmental jurisprudence,** distinguishing between the **source of executive power and the limits of regularisation.**

Office Memorandum and Statutory Notification

- **An OM** is an **administrative instruction** issued by a ministry or department and does not have the force of law.
- **A statutory notification,** by contrast, is issued under authority granted by a statute — the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, in this case — and notified in the Gazette.

Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)

- EIA can be defined as the **study to predict the effect of a proposed activity/project on the environment.**
- **EIA systematically examines both beneficial and adverse consequences** of the project and ensures that these effects are taken into account during project design.
    - It also **proposes measures to mitigate adverse effects.**
- **Significance:** Protection of environment, optimum utilisation of resources and saving of time and cost of the project.
    - It also lessens conflicts by promoting community participation, informing decision makers, and helping lay the base for environmentally sound projects.

EIA in India

- **1994:** The Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MEF), under the Environmental (Protection) Act 1986**, made Environmental Clearance (EC) mandatory.**
- **EIA 2006 Regime:** It is the governing legal instrument to grant green clearance for establishment or expansion of an industry **on the basis of the expected environmental impact of the project.**
    - It made it **mandatory** for various projects such as mining, thermal power plants, river valley, infrastructure and industries to get environment clearance.
    - However, unlike the EIA Notification of 1994, the new legislation has **put the onus of clearing projects on the state government** depending on the size/capacity of the project.

Legal and Institutional Framework

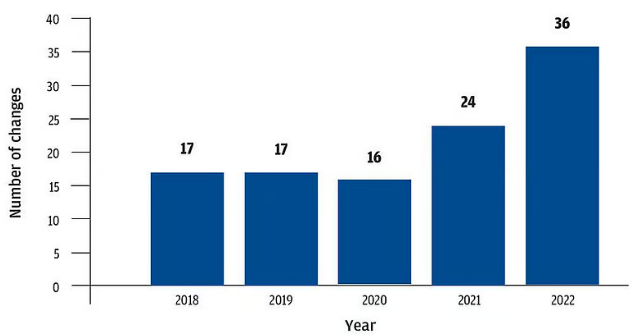
- **EIA Notifications:** Issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) using powers under the Environmental (Protection) Act 1986.
- **Categorisation of Projects**
    - **Category A:** National-level projects with significant impacts (e.g., large dams, major highways).
    - **Category B1:** Moderately sized projects with regional impact.
    - **Category B2:** Small-scale projects with less impact.
- **Institutional Authorities:**
    - **Central Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC):** For Category A projects (national level).
    - **State Expert Appraisal Committees (SEACs):** For Category B projects (state level).
    - **State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs):** Grant environmental clearance at state level.

Concerns

- One positive of the 2006 EIA notification is its **dynamism to accommodate changes in its provisions and processes** as per the requirement of the changing times.
    - However, this characteristic of the legal instrument seems to have been exploited.
- Over 110 changes were made in just 5 years, most of them without public consultation.

TRACK CHANGE

Number of changes introduced in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, in past five years



Source: CSE analysis

- **This flexibility has been misused** and industries get approvals, even if they pollute or harm the environment.

Best Practices to Improve EIA Process

- Create an independent EIA authority to avoid conflict of interest.
- Strengthen public consultation, especially in local languages.
- Ensure scientific and transparent baseline data.
- Regularly update the list of exempted projects based on environmental concerns.

Source: TH

PM VIDYALAXMI SCHEME

In Context

- PM-Vidyalaxmi is supporting equitable higher education by providing collateral-free education loans and interest assistance.

PM-Vidyalaxmi

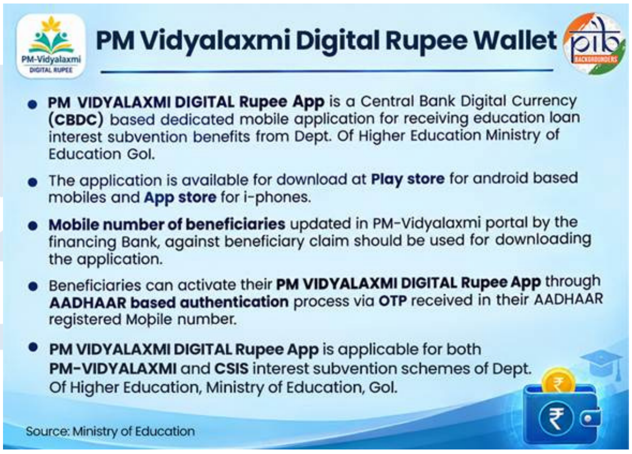
- It is a Central Government Scheme approved in November 2024 for providing collateral-free, guarantor-free education loan to meritorious students admitted in designated Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs).

Feature

- **Collateral-free Loans**: PM-Vidyalaxmi provides collateral-free and guarantor-free education loans for students admitted on their own merit to designated QHEIs in the country.
  - Currently, 1,425 QHEIs are covered under the scheme, including both public and private institutions.
  - Management quota, NRI quota, etc. admissions will not get this benefit.
- **Government Credit Guarantee**: The Government provides a 75% credit guarantee for loans up to ₹7.5 lakh, reducing the risk for banks in lending and improving access to education finance.
- **Flexible Loan Coverage:** There is no limit to the loan amount. Loans are available for tuition fees, hostel and mess charges, refundable/ non-refundable institutional fees, laptops and other reasonable educational and living expenses.
- **Low-Cost Loan Terms**: Interest rates capped at EBLR + 0.5%, which is lower than the regular education loans.
  - Repayment can be made for a maximum period of 15 years, excluding the course period + one year moratorium.
- **Interest Subsidy:** 100% interest subvention under PM-USP CSIS (Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsahan Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme) for eligible students having annual family income up to Rs.4.5 lakh.
  - 3% interest subsidy under PM-Vidyalaxmi on loans up to Rs 10 lakh for students with annual family income up to Rs 8 lakh during the moratorium period.
  - The subsidy will be available only on the first Rs 10 lakh for loans above Rs 10 lakh.

PM Vidyalaxmi Digital Rupee App (CBDC Wallet)

- Once the loan is sanctioned and disbursed, eligible students can apply for interest subvention based on their family income.
- The subsidy amount is credited to the beneficiary's **PM Vidyalaxmi Digital Rupee App (CBDC Wallet)** and subsequently transferred to the education loan account.



Significance

- It improves access to quality higher education, supports the aspirations of NEP 2020 and SDG 4, and helps build a skilled, inclusive, and future-ready workforce.
- It offers a one-stop online portal for application, tracking, and management of education loans under various schemes.
  - The real-time dashboard enhances transparency and facilitates efficient processing.
- The scheme allows equal access to education finance for women and transgender students, encouraging higher education, enhanced employability, and increased workforce participation.

- Students belonging to EWS, OBC, SC, ST, PwD and other social groups benefit under the scheme, thus reducing the financial barriers and ensuring equitable access to higher education.

Source: PIB

RBI'S ASSESSMENT OF RUPEE UNDERVALUATION

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor has stated that the Indian rupee is undervalued in both nominal and Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) terms.

About

- The RBI Governor stated that the RBI does not target any specific exchange rate but intervenes in the foreign exchange market only to contain excessive volatility and maintain orderly market conditions.

Undervaluation of a Currency

- A currency is considered undervalued when its **market exchange rate is lower than the level justified by a country's underlying economic fundamentals.**
- In other words, the currency is trading at a weaker value than the level suggested by factors such as **economic growth, inflation trends, productivity levels, external sector stability, foreign exchange reserves, and investor confidence** would normally indicate.
- When temporary external shocks cause a currency to depreciate beyond its equilibrium value, economists generally describe the currency as undervalued.

Why has the rupee depreciated?

- **Rising global crude oil prices:** Increased international oil prices increase India's import bill, and increase demand for US dollars, putting downward pressure on the rupee.
- **The geopolitical conflicts in the West Asia** region generate a sense of uncertainty in the global markets, disrupt energy supply and add pressure to the emerging market currencies like rupee.
- **Strengthening of the US Dollar:** A stronger US dollar, driven by global demand for dollar assets and expectations of tighter monetary conditions in the United States, reduces the relative value of other currencies.
- **Higher global risk aversion:** During periods of global uncertainty, investors prefer safe-haven assets such as the US dollar, leading to capital outflows from emerging markets and weakening their currencies.
- **Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) outflows:** Withdrawal of foreign investments from Indian equity and debt markets increases demand for dollars as investors convert their rupee holdings into foreign currency, contributing to rupee depreciation.

Challenges associated with an undervalued rupee

- **Imports become more expensive**, increasing the country's import bill.
- Higher crude oil prices can lead to **imported inflation.**
- Industries dependent on imported raw materials face increased production costs.
- Servicing external debt denominated in foreign currency becomes more expensive.
- Persistent depreciation may reduce investor confidence if driven by structural weaknesses.

Advantages of a weaker rupee

- A weaker rupee **improves the price competitiveness** of Indian exports.
- Exporters receive **higher earnings in rupee terms.**
- Domestic industries may benefit from increased export demand.

What is the Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER)?

- The Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) is a **weighted average index of the value of the Indian rupee** against the currencies of India's major trading partners.
- It measures the **rupee's movement against a basket of currencies.** The RBI currently calculates the NEER using a basket of **40 currencies**, which together account for nearly **88% of India's total merchandise trade.**
- **The base year is 2015–16**, with the index value fixed at **100.**
- The weights assigned to each currency are based on the respective country's share in India's foreign trade. However, the **NEER does not account for inflation** differences between countries.

Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER)

- The Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) is the **inflation-adjusted** version of the NEER.
- It measures the **value of the rupee against the currencies of India's major trading partners** after adjusting for differences in inflation.
- REER is regarded as the most reliable **indicator of a country's external competitiveness.**

Source: TH

IRDAI REFORMS 2026: MODERNISING INDIA'S INSURANCE SECTOR

Context

- Recently, **IRDAI** has approved a set of reforms by the IRDAI aimed at modernising the insurance industry, strengthening governance, enhancing protection to policyholders and speeding up insurance penetration.
- These reforms would facilitate the implementation of **Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Act, 2025.**

Background

- The insurance industry is a vital part of the economy, helping to provide financial security, mobilising long-term savings and contributing to economic growth.
- To realise the objective of **'Insurance for All by 2047'**, IRDAI has brought in regulatory and supervisory changes to make the sector more transparent, efficient and investor-friendly while maintaining enhanced protection for the policyholders.

Key Reforms Approved by IRDAI

- **Greater Operational and Financial Flexibility:** IRDAI has approved amendments to:
  - IRDAI (Actuarial, Finance and Investment Functions of Insurers) (Second Amendment) Regulations, 2026;
  - IRDAI (Registration, Capital Structure, Transfer of Shares and Amalgamation of Insurers) (Amendment) Regulations, 2026;
  - **Key features** include liberalised investment norms for insurers, easier capital infusion, simplified corporate restructuring, streamlined rules for transfer of shares and amalgamation, and stronger actuarial oversight and financial governance.
  - **Expected Outcomes:** Improved ease of doing business, enhanced financial resilience of insurers, and better long-term growth without compromising policyholder interests.
- **Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund (PEPF):** The **IRDAI (Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund) Regulations, 2026** has been adopted by the IRDAI Operationalising the **Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund (PEPF)** under **Section 16A of the IRDA Act, 1999** enacted by the **SBSR Act.**
  - PEPF aims to increase insurance awareness and financial literacy, improve grievance redressal mechanisms, enhance policyholder services through technology, enable tracing and recovery of unclaimed insurance amounts, and support policyholder protection and empowerment initiatives.
  - The fund institutionalises consumer protection and creates trust in the insurance ecosystem.
- **Insurance Intermediaries Reforms:** IRDAI amends guidelines relating to insurance intermediaries. **Major changes are:**
  - **Mandatory tagging of the authorised salesperson** on every insurance proposal, policy and certificate.
  - Continuous registration paid annually, not periodic renewal.
  - Consistency with the **SBSR Act** and **Foreign Investment Rules.**
  - Better governance, disclosure and accountability standards.
  - **Benefits** include more responsibility and traceability in the distribution of insurance, improved transparency for policyholders, lower compliance costs and better service delivery by intermediaries, third-party administrators and surveyors.
- **Transparent Penalty Framework:** IRDAI approved **IRDAI (Manner and Procedure for Imposition of Penalties) Regulations, 2026** The main provisions are:
  - Uniform and transparent enforcement regime.
  - Structured method for regulatory processes.
  - Transparent methods for issuing show cause notices.

- **Importance:** Improves fairness and consistency of regulatory measures, increases regulatory clarity and promotes accountability and public confidence.
- **Expansion of Insurance Sector:** ProTec General Insurance Ltd. received Certificate of Registration from IRDAI.
  - It is the fourth insurer registered in 2026 and includes two general insurers, one health insurer and one reinsurer.
  - It indicates the growing competition and expansion of the insurance business.
- **Foreign Investment Reforms:** The government's announcement to permit up to **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in insurers:
  - One life insurer and one general insurer have already boosted foreign shareholding over the **prior 74% cap.**
  - **Expected Impact:** Increased capital inflows, improved investor confidence, increased innovation and capacity to expand, and more long-term investment into the Indian insurance business.

Significance of the Reforms

- Increases policyholder protection.
- Enhances governance and regulatory oversight.
- Improves transparency and accountability.
- Facilitates sectoral growth and capital formation.
- Simplifies compliance and makes it easier to do business.
- Supports the objective of extending insurance coverage throughout India.

Related Challenges

- Ensuring successful delivery by insurers and intermediaries.
- Regulatory Flexibility against Consumer Protection.
- Expanding insurance coverage in rural and underbanked markets.
- Citizen insurance literacy
- Upgradation of digital infrastructure for grievance redressal and unclaimed amount recovery.

Way Forward

- Timely implementation of the SBSR Act and accompanying regulations.
- Conduct targeted literacy programs to raise awareness about insurance.
- Enhance digital platforms for policyholder services and grievance redressal.
- Innovate, but regulate strongly.
- Increase access to inexpensive insurance products to realise the objective of **'Insurance for All by 2047'.**

Source: IE

THE PROPOSED THEATERISATION OF THE INDIAN ARMED FORCES

In Context

- India is close to completing the process of theaterisation, bringing Army, Navy and Air Force into joint theatre commands.

Theaterisation

- It refers to integrating the command structures of the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy to optimise decision making and resource utilisation during wars and operations,
  - It involves unifying the resources of all three branches under a single commander for seamless coordination.
- India presently has seven Army commands, seven Air Force commands and three Naval commands apart from the two tri-service commands, viz. Andaman and Nicobar Command and Strategic Forces Command.
  - The Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQIDS) is helping higher defence coordination.

NEED FOR THEATERISATION IN INDIA

- **Changing Security Environment:** The traditional command structure of the Indian military has not kept pace with the changing security threats posed by China and Pakistan, calling for a more integrated military structure.
  - The Galwan clash in 2020 and the Operation Sindoor in 2025 highlighted the need for better joint operations amongst the three services.
- **Lack of Jointness**: The Army, Navy and Air Force today operate through separate single-service commands, often working independently of each other, resulting in limited coordination and operational synergy.

- **Global Best Practice:** India is moving towards theatre-isation by integrating its armed forces into joint theatre commands, following countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and C
  - The United States theatre commands demonstrate that integrated tri-service commands greatly enhance operational efficiency, unity of command and success in modern warfare.
- **Strategic Importance**: Establishing theatre commands will help India develop joint multi-domain warfighting capabilities, enhance preparedness for future wars and boost the country's overall defence preparedness.
  - It is intended to improve joint planning, training, logistics, intelligence sharing and operational effectiveness, thereby resulting in better utilisation of military resources.

Proposed Theatre Commands

- India has almost finalised the structure for three integrated theatre commands focused on China, Pakistan and the maritime domain.
  - **Western Theatre for Pakistan**: To be headed by an Indian Air Force officer. Increasingly important air power and long-range precision strikes, as demonstrated during Operation Sindoor (2025).
    - **Headquarters:** Jaipur
  - **Northern Theatre for China**: To be headed by an army officer, given the preponderant role of ground forces along the Himalayan border.
    - **Headquarters:** Lucknow
  - **Maritime Theatre**: Will be commanded by a Navy officer to boost India's maritime security in the Indian Ocean region.
- **Organization formation:** A four-star officer will become the new Vice Chief of Defence Staff and will be responsible for the day-to-day joint operational matters.
  - The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) will be the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee who will continue to be the Secretary, Department of Military Affairs (DMA) and will provide strategic leadership.
    - Each theatre command will have deputy commanders from another service to encourage integration between services.

Present Status

- The proposal is undergoing final internal consultations within the military before being submitted to the Ministry of Defence for review and approval by the country's top leadership.
- Since 2021, the reform has undergone several revisions, reflecting the different views on the extent and structure of integration within the armed forces.

Major Challenges

- **Knowledge Gap:** Theatre commanders will command forces from all three services and may not have deep operational knowledge of unfamiliar domains, which could impact decision-making during crises.
- **Service Culture and Career Issues**: Differences in organisational culture, rank structures and career advancement may affect morale and efficiency.
- **Slower Decisions**: The inclusion of the Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) adds an extra level to the command chain, which can impede quick operational decision-making in conflict.
- **Transition Risks**: Gaps in shared logistics, communications and interoperability may only become apparent when military operations are actually underway.
- **Strategic Worries:** India also faces simultaneous security challenges from China and Pakistan, and reduced readiness during transition is a big concern.

Suggestions

- Develop a Military Readiness Framework that emphasises operational capability, not simply resources.
- Establish clear measures of readiness and standards for evaluating combat effectiveness.
- Set up institutional oversight with a Defence Readiness Council and Military Readiness Committee.
- Reserve forces should be kept outside the new theatre structure during the transition, and diplomacy should be used to mitigate external pressures as reforms mature.

Conclusion

- Theatreisation aims to enhance joint planning, quicker decision-making, integrated operations and prudent use of military resources, while strengthening India's preparedness for a two-front contingency involving China and Pakistan.
- Theatreisation is an essential reform to modernise India's military and improve joint warfighting capability.
- But its success will depend on careful management of the temporary dip in operational readiness through sound planning, institutional oversight and phased implementation so that India remains prepared for any conflict during the transition.

Source:TH

NEWS IN SHORT

U.S. FAST-TRACKS ACT FOR 100% TARIFFS ON TRADE PARTNERS OF RUSSIA

Context

- The U.S. Senate has voted **to fast-track the passage of the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026.**

About

- The bill allows the US to impose **100% tariffs** on the **world's top five purchasers of Russian oil or natural gas, including India and China.**
  - Apart from China and India, the other top purchasers of Russian oil are **Slovakia, Hungary and Azerbaijan.**
- The bill calls for the **US Trade Representative to reassess the top five purchasers every 180 days,** to adjust tariff rates based on changes in purchasing behaviour.
- **It provides exceptions for countries** that import **less than 15%** of their natural gas from Russia and are taking steps to reduce those imports.
- **Regarding Iran,** the legislation extends the **Iran Sanctions Act** for an additional five years, keeping critical secondary restrictions in place until 2031.
  - It also **extends existing sanctions authority** aimed at r**estricting funding for Iran's energy and weapons sectors.**
- **Supporters of the bill claim** it's necessary to choke off **Russia's energy income,** weakening the Russian President's **ability to finance the war in Ukraine.**

Source: TH

DAANVEER INITIATIVE

In News

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched the **DAANVEER initiative** to digitize Gram Panchayats.

DAANVEER

- It is a **citizen participation initiative** aimed at strengthening the digital infrastructure of Gram Panchayats across the country.
- It will enable citizens, organisations, philanthropists, and the Indian diaspora to donate standardised computer bundles to eligible Gram Panchayats voluntarily.
- The initiative is likely to benefit **around 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats** by supplementing existing digital governance platforms like e-GramSwaraj, Meri Panchayat, Sabha Saar, AuditOnline and Gram Manchitra.
- **Major Features:** It provides pre-approved, quality-checked computer bundles tailored to fulfil the specifications of each state.
  - It provides end-to-end digital tracking, automatic delivery details, transparency, and a digital certificate of appreciation to donors.
  - It is available on the Meri Panchayat Mobile App
  - It is connected to the DigiHaat marketplace for easy donations.

Significance

- It will improve digital governance and delivery of public services at the grassroots level.
- It will improve the efficiency, transparency and accessibility of Gram Panchayat services.
- It makes voluntary public participation institutionalised through a transparent and accountable digital platform.
- It enables Digital India, Viksit Bharat and digitally empowered rural governance.

Source: PIB

GOVT APPROVES RBI'S TRIALS OF ₹10, ₹20 POLYMER NOTES

Context

- The government has approved the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) proposal to introduce polymer banknotes in the denominations of 10 and 20 rupees.

About

- The RBI will introduce **one billion (100 crore) polymer banknotes each** of the ₹10 and ₹20 denominations for **field trials**.
- Regular issuance of polymer banknotes in these denominations will be considered after the successful completion of the field trials.

What are Polymer Banknotes?

- Unlike conventional cotton-based banknotes, polymer banknotes (also known as plastic banknotes) are more resistant to dirt, moisture and tearing, giving them a longer lifespan.
- They also incorporate advanced security features, making counterfeiting more difficult.
- **Australia** became the **first country** to introduce polymer currency in **1988**, and today over **60 countries**, including the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam, use polymer notes either fully or partially.
- India had earlier experimented with polymer banknotes. In **2012**, the RBI conducted pilot trials of **₹10 polymer banknotes** in Kochi, Mysuru, Jaipur, Bhubaneswar and Shimla, representing diverse climatic conditions. However, the initiative was later discontinued due to operational and ATM-related challenges.
- These technological limitations have since been addressed, enabling ATMs to process polymer banknotes without difficulty.

Why is the Move Significant?

- Cash demand is still rising. India's currency in circulation reached a record ₹42.86 trillion, growing 11.5% year-on-year, showing that despite UPI's success, cash remains important.
- At the same time, maintaining paper currency is becoming expensive. India spent over ₹6,370 crore on printing banknotes in FY25, while nearly 23.8 billion soiled notes had to be withdrawn from circulation.

Source: AIR

INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE CULTIVATION OF SCIENCE (IACS)

Context

- **2026 Marks the 150 years** of establishment of the **Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS).**

About

- **In 1869, Mahendralal Sircar (1833-1904)** in an article published in the Calcutta Journal of Medicine, proposed the establishment of the **Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS).**
- **In 1876,** IACS was established by **Dr. Mahendralal Sircar** as the **country's first national institution dedicated to scientific research by Indians.**
- It is located in **Kolkata, West Bengal.**
- It is an **autonomous public research institution** funded **jointly** by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Government of West Bengal.
- The Institute is run by the **Governing Council,** which is the apex policy making body.
- The IACS has **cultivated a legacy of intellectual curiosity, scientific excellence, and national service** that continues to inspire generations of researchers.
- **Most Celebrated Scientists from the IACS:** Prof CV Raman, Nobel Laureate and discoverer of the Raman Effect; Jagadish Chandra Bose, pioneer of radio and plant sciences; Meghnad Saha, creator of the Saha ionisation equation and architect of modern scientific institutions in India; and Satyendra Nath Bose, whose collaboration with Albert Einstein gave the world Bose Einstein statistics and the concept of Bosons.

Source: TH

FIELDS MEDAL 2026

Context

- The **Fields Medal 2026**, often described as the "Nobel Prize of Mathematics," has been awarded to **Yu Deng, John Pardon, Jacob Tsimerman, and Hong Wang.**

About

- The Fields Medal was established in **1936** and is named after Canadian mathematician **J. C. Fields**.
- It is awarded **once every four years** by the **International Mathematical Union (IMU)**, an international non-governmental and non-profit scientific organisation that aims to promote international cooperation in mathematics.
- The medal recognises **outstanding contributions to mathematics** by researchers **under the age of 40.**
- Unlike the Nobel Prize, which can be shared by at most three people, the Fields Medal recognises at least two, and up to four people, in every four-year cycle.
- Each recipient receives the Fields Medal along with a cash prize of **15,000 Canadian dollars**.

Did you know?

- Two mathematicians of **Indian origin** have won the Fields Medal so far. **Manjul Bhargava** won it in 2014, followed by **Akshay Venkatesh** in 2018.

Source: TH

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