DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 06-08-2026

Table of Content

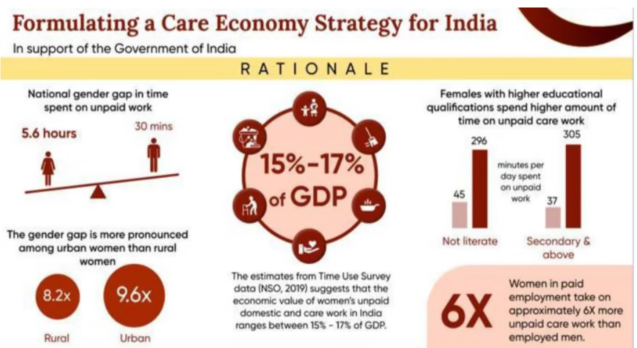
NITI AAYOG RELEASES REPORT TO STRENGTHEN INDIA'S CAREGIVING WORKFORCE

Context

- NITI Aayog, in its report "**Reimagining Care: Strategies for Empowering Caregivers in Viksit Bharat @2047,**" has advocated the setting up of a **National Carer Council (NCC)** to regulate, standardise and professionalise the caregiving services in India.

What is the Care Economy?

- Caregiving involves the **physical, emotional, and social support** provided to individuals who are unable to perform daily activities independently due to age, illness, or disability, according to the World Health Organisation.
- There are two types of caregivers - **formal and informal.**
  - **A formal caregiver**, referred to as a personal care aid, is a professional who provides non-medical assistance and support to help older individuals, people with disabilities (PwDs), or patients with terminal or chronic illnesses with their daily activities.
  - **Informal caregivers** can be family members, friends, or volunteers who take care of the elderly.
- **The Indian care services market** was valued at **USD 29.62 billion in 2023** and is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.76 per cent, reaching USD 72.31 billion by 2030.



Why is the Demand for Care Services Rising?

- **Demographic Transition:** An expanding elderly population is creating the need for long-term eldercare services in India.
- **Urbanisation and Migration:** The joint family structures are being eroded because of rapid urbanisation and migration. Nuclear families are generally devoid of informal networks for caring support.
- **Rising Female Workforce Participation:** More women entering the workforce has increased the demand for organised childcare and caregiving services.

Government Initiatives Related to the Care Economy

- **SHATAYU (Senior Holistic Care Assistance and Training for Your Utility) Dashboard:** A Dashboard, developed to support and strengthen caregiving services for senior citizens across the country, was also launched during the National Workshop on "Creating a Well-Functioning Care Economy" in 2026.
- **JEEVAN (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network) Application:** It is an accessible, citizen-facing mobile application engineered to serve as a single-window support ecosystem for senior citizens.
  - The app consolidates information on government welfare schemes, senior citizen homes, and support services.
- **Vayo Manasa Sanjeevani:** It is an initiative to spread awareness and provide online education to promote mental health support among elderly persons and support healthy ageing.

Initiatives Taken by the State Government

- **Geriatric Caregiver Training Programme: The Government of Odisha** runs a 3-month certificate course, which provides training for extending physical and mental health support to elderly persons.
- **Monthly Allowance for Unpaid Caregivers: Karnataka** became the first state in India to introduce a scheme titled **"Carer's monthly allowance scheme"** which provides a monthly allowance of **Rs. 1,000** to parents of individuals with severe disabilities such as Cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis.

Challenges in Implementing Care Economy Reforms

- **Fiscal Constraints:** The expansion of the care infrastructure and staff training will require significant public investment and a long-term commitment to funding.
- **Social Attitudes to Care Work:** Care work is still perceived as a private family responsibility and not a public policy issue. **Societal patriarchal traditions** that are highly ingrained curtail the acknowledgement of unpaid caring work.
- **Weak Regulatory Capacity:** Ensuring quality standards and monitoring care institutions across India is an administrative challenge.

- **Lack of Skilled Care Workforce:** India does not have a properly trained care workforce, particularly in the areas of eldercare, disability care and early children care.

Way Ahead

- Establish a **National Caregiving Policy** with adequate legal structure.
- Establish the National Carer Council as the highest regulating body.
- Scale up carer training initiatives across the country through public-private partnerships.
- Integrate caring with health, social protection and skills development programs.

Source: NITI AAYOG

INDIAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE (ISI) BILL, 2026

In News

- The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Bill, 2026 has been introduced in Parliament.

Background of Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)

- **Origin**: The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) was established in December 1931 in Kolkata as a learned society in the Statistical Laboratory at Presidency College
    - It was set up by the eminent statistician P. C. Mahalanobis.
  - It was registered in 1932 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, and later under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act of 1961
- **Headquarters and Courses offered**: It is headquartered in Kolkata with centres in Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, and Tezpur
  - It offers courses, including those in statistics and mathematics, and has several research divisions.
- **Decision-making body**: Its highest decision-making body is the 33-member council — including an elected chairman, six representatives of the Centre, and scientists not employed at the institute.
  - Representatives from the Centre include those from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the Ministry of Finance, and the Reserve Bank of India.
  - The director, the academic and administrative head, is appointed by the council.
- **Declaration as an Institution of National Importance:** In 1959, it was declared an institute of national importance through an Act of Parliament, giving it the power to grant degrees and making it eligible for Central grants and audits. However, it continued as a society.

Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Bill, 2026

- It was introduced by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) to repeal the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959.
- It aims to enhance the governance of the institute by transforming it from a registered society into a statutory body corporate, similar to the IITs and IIMs.

Features

- **Governing bodies:** The Bill proposes a Board of Governors as the main executive and policy-making body responsible to the Central Government.
  - There will be an Academic Council, chaired by a Director, which will advise the Board on academic issues, and it will be responsible for the curriculum, examinations, academic standards and promotion of interdisciplinary research.
  - The Bill provides that the Visitor shall be the President of India.
- **Composition and Appointment**: The Board shall consist of 11 members, including a Chairperson appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Central Government, government nominees, eminent experts and representatives of the Institute.
  - The Director will be appointed through a government-led selection process, and the Visitor will have the power to remove the Director and order enquiries.
- **Transfer of Assets**: The Bill also provides for transfer of all assets, liabilities, employees and academic programmes of the existing ISI to the new statutory institution without any effect on service conditions and academic continuity.

Criticism

- The Central Government would **gain more control over its governance, eroding the Institute's autonomy.**
- Faculty members, students and researchers claim the **proposed Board of Governors is packed with government nominees.**

- The Centre have more say in **crucial decisions like appointment, review and removal of the Director.**
- Critics also claim that the Bill was drafted without proper consultation among stakeholders.
- They are concerned that the **Director would become a de facto appointee of the Central Government**, compromising ISI's academic and institutional independence.
- Another controversy is over the location of ISI headquarters. The new Bill, unlike the 1959 Act, does not mention Kolkata as the headquarters, raising fears of a possible shift.

Governments Stand

- The current system, in which key decisions are cleared by a General Body consisting of over 1,000 members, has impeded institutional reforms and modernisation.
- The government said the Bill is based on recommendations of four Review Committees that called for governance reforms, including reducing the size of the ISI Council and promoting merit-based appointments over elections.
- It also states that stakeholder consultations were carried out, including a brainstorming session in 2025 and public comments under the pre-legislative consultation policy.
- The government has rejected any suggestion of shifting the headquarters of the Institute from Kolkata.

Conclusion and Way Forward

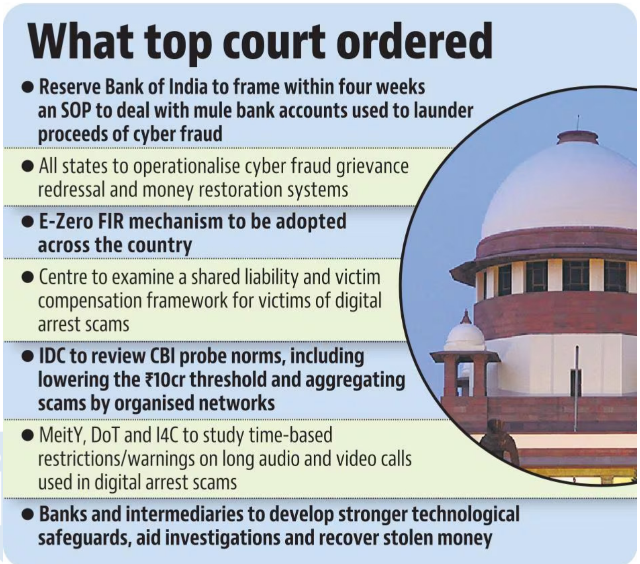
- The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Bill, 2026 aims to bring ISI at par with other Institutions of National Importance to modernise its governance and ensure administrative efficiency.
- But concerns about institutional autonomy, academic freedom and increased government influence speak to the need for a balanced approach.
- And the success of the reforms will depend on transparent governance, adequate representation of academic experts, strong safeguards for institutional autonomy, and periodic independent reviews.

Source: TH

SUPREME COURT MANDATES SOPS, MECHANISMS TO CURB 'DIGITAL ARRESTS'

Context

- The Supreme Court passed a detailed order directing the Centre, States, the Reserve Bank of India and telecom authorities **to prepare standard operating procedures (SOPs) to curb "digital arrests" scams.**



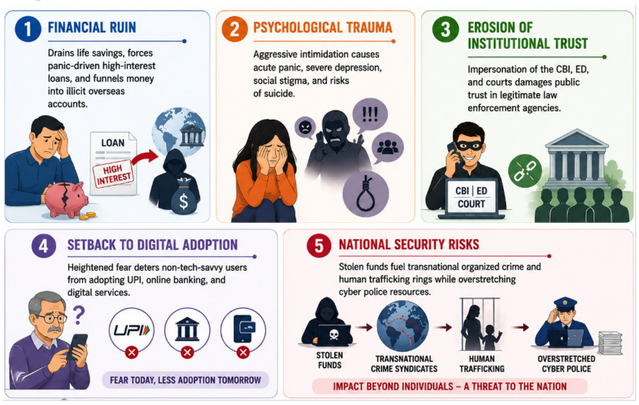
What is Digital Arrest Scams?

- A digital arrest is a **cyber extortion scam** where **fraudsters impersonate law enforcement or government officials**, using fake video calls, staged studio backdrops, and forged legal documents to terrify victims into believing they face immediate imprisonment, forcing them to transfer money under extreme psychological pressure.

Main Challenges in Tackling the Scams

- **High-Tech Tools:** Use of deepfakes, number spoofing, encrypted messaging, and dark web data leaks makes attribution difficult.
- **Psychological Pressure:** Fraudsters exploit fear, urgency, and authority figures, especially targeting senior citizens.
- **Instant Payment Rails:** Rapid money transfers via UPI and online banking allow scammers to siphon funds before accounts can be frozen.
- **Enforcement & Reporting Barriers:** Delayed victim reporting due to fear or embarrassment, combined with cross-border legal challenges.

Impacts of These Scams



Key Supreme Court Directions

- Earlier, the Supreme Court tasked the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** with cracking down on 'digital arrest' scammers by giving the **agency a "free hand" to launch an anti-corruption probe** into bankers involved in the opening of mule accounts linked to cybercrimes.
- **Primary Role for CBI:** CBI authorized as the lead agency for digital arrest scams and all states directed to give general consent under the DSPE Act, 1946.
  - The Supreme Court to directly order the CBI, overriding State consent, to conduct a pan-India investigation and hunt down scammers.
  - The court directed the CBI to identify police officers from different States, and domain experts, to aid the investigation.
- **Global Action:** CBI tasked with coordinating with INTERPOL to dismantle overseas cyber syndicates.
- **AI-Driven Financial Tracking**: RBI was directed to respond to the use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to trace 'layering' or the moving of the proceeds of crime through multiple bank accounts to escape detection.
- **Platform & Telecom Accountability:** Digital platforms ordered to share data under IT Rules 2021, while the Telecom Department must enforce stricter SIM registration and KYC norms.
- **Regional Integration:** States and UTs instructed to operationalize regional cyber units linked directly to the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C).

Initiatives to Tackle Digital Arrest

- **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)**: It provides a framework and ecosystem for Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.
  - 'Joint Cyber Coordination Teams' have been constituted for seven regions at Mewat, Jamtara, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Visakhapatnam and Guwahati under the I4C.
- **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal**: It is launched to enable the public to report incidents pertaining to all types of cyber crimes.
  - **A toll-free number 1930** has been operationalized to get assistance in lodging online cyber complaints.
- **Anti-Spoofing Systems:** DoT measures to identify and block incoming international calls disguised as domestic Indian numbers.
- **Public Awareness:** Regular alerts distributed through SMS, railway/airport displays, and the CyberDost initiative.
- **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal**: It is launched to enable the public to report incidents pertaining to all types of cyber crimes.
  - **A toll-free number 1930** has been operationalized to get assistance in lodging online cyber complaints.
  - The **Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System** module has also been launched for immediate reporting of financial frauds and to stop siphoning off funds by the fraudsters.
- **Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre):** This initiative is aimed at creating awareness about **botnet and malware infections** and providing **tools for detection and cleaning**.
  - It also provides cyber security tips and best practices for citizens and organisations.

Source: TH

274 FUGITIVES BROUGHT BACK TO INDIA IN PAST SEVEN YEARS: MHA

Context

- As per the Ministry of Home Affairs, **India has brought back 274 fugitive criminals from 36 countries between 2019 and 2026.**

What is a Fugitive Economic Offender (FEO)?

- **A Fugitive Economic Offender (FEO) is a person:**
  - Against whom an arrest warrant has been issued for committing a scheduled economic offence involving ₹100 crore or more, and

- Who has left India to avoid criminal prosecution or refuses to return to face the legal process.
- It is defined under the **Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.**
- A director or deputy director (appointed under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002) may **file an application before a special court** (designated under the 2002 Act) **to declare a person as a fugitive economic offender.**

Key Features of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018

- **Confiscation of Property:** The Act empowers authorities to attach and confiscate properties of the offender located **both in India and abroad.**
  - The law also **covers benami properties and assets** indirectly controlled by the offender.
- **Bar on Civil Claims:** The Act disallows declared FEOs from initiating or defending any civil claims in Indian courts.
- **Special Court Mechanism:** The Act provides for adjudication of cases through special courts established under the Prevention of **Money Laundering Act, 2002.**

What is Extradition?

- Extradition is the **recognised international mechanism** for the timely return of fugitives from foreign countries.
- It is defined as the "**delivery of an accused or convicted individual** from the country he is found in, to another country that requests his extradition".
- The process is **governed by treaties and agreements** which adopt internationally recognised legal principles for the surrender of fugitives.

Institutional Framework Governing Extradition

- **The Central Bureau of Investigation**, acting as India's Interpol National Central Bureau, issues Interpol notices, and engages with foreign police agencies to locate fugitives.
- **The Ministry of External Affairs** manages diplomatic engagement related to extradition and mutual legal assistance.
  - **India has extradition treaties** with around **48 countries** and extradition arrangements with **12 countries.**
- **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty:** It is a mechanism whereby **countries cooperate** with one another in order to provide and obtain formal assistance in prevention, suppression, investigation and **prosecution of crime.**
  - **Aim:** To ensure that the **criminals do not escape or sabotage** the due process of law for want of evidence available in different countries.
- **Letters Rogatory (LRs):** These are **formal requests** from an Indian court to a foreign court for judicial assistance such as evidence collection, serving summons.
  - It is done through diplomatic channels and is usually slower than MLAT.
- **Extradition in India** is governed by the **Extradition Act, 1962**, which provides the legal basis for surrendering or receiving fugitives under treaties or executive arrangements.
- India is also a party to **multilateral conventions** such as;
  - **United Nations Convention against Corruption** and
  - **United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.**

Structural Challenges in Extradition

- **Judicial Scrutiny in Foreign Jurisdictions:** Foreign courts independently examine extradition requests, **prison conditions and human rights safeguards** in the requesting country.
  - These assessments frequently prolong or obstruct extradition proceedings involving Indian requests.
- **Asylum and Political Protection Claims:** Many fugitives claim political persecution or seek asylum in host countries, transforming criminal proceedings into complex legal and humanitarian disputes.
- **Absence of Treaties with Certain Jurisdictions:** Several fugitives reside in countries with which India does not have extradition treaties, limiting India's ability to secure their return through legal compulsion.
- **Outdated Treaty Structures:** Older treaties follow a restrictive list system, which excludes modern crimes such as cybercrime and complex financial fraud.

Governance and Security Implications

- **Impact on Rule of Law:** Low extradition outcomes weaken deterrence against economic and transnational crimes and encourage offenders to evade domestic legal processes by fleeing abroad.

- **Internal Security and Financial Integrity:** Delayed extradition hampers India's efforts to combat money laundering, corruption, and organized crime, while also undermining public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Government Initiatives

- **BHARATPOL:** The Government launched BHARATPOL, connecting more than one thousand 4 hundred agencies with INTERPOL, reducing the time required for information sharing to 3 to 10 days.
- **Use of Technology:** The government used satellite technology and digital footprints to geo-locate fugitive criminals hiding abroad after changing their names and identities through Operation Trishul.
- **Provisions in Criminal Laws:** The government implemented three new criminal laws, incorporating special provisions relating to fugitive offenders.
    - For the first time, Sections 355 and 356 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) provide for trial in absentia, enabling the entire judicial process, from trial to prosecution—to be completed even in the absence of a fugitive accused.
- **The constitution of a Standing Focus Group** under the Multi Agency Centre (MAC) of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) in 2026 marks a significant institutional step in strengthening India's fugitive management framework.
    - The Group is responsible for prioritising fugitive cases, standardising dossiers, bridging information gaps, ensuring sustained follow-up with foreign partners, and providing national-level support to cases initiated by State agencies.

Way Ahead

- India needs to **expand its extradition treaty network,** especially with major financial centres, and pursue sustained **diplomatic engagement to expedite pending cases.**
- **Improving prison infrastructure**, ensuring **timely trials**, and reinforcing **procedural safeguards** are needed to address concerns raised by foreign courts and strengthen India's extradition credibility.

Source: TH

RISE OF INDIA'S ELECTRIC VEHICLES ECOSYSTEM

Context

- The **eMobility** is turning into a key driver of economic growth, energy security, and a cleaner future, as India is **rapidly shifting to electric vehicles** (EVs).

What is an Electric Vehicle (EV)?

- An EV is a vehicle powered by an electric motor that uses energy stored in a battery. It can be recharged from an external power source.
- There are **four types of EVs:**
    - **Battery EVs (BEVs):** These are fully electric.
    - **Hybrid EVs (HEVs) & Plug-in HEVs (PHEVs):** These combine an internal combustion engine and an electric motor to power the vehicle.
        - PHEVs additionally have externally rechargeable battery packs for extended electric-only operation.
    - **Fuel Cell EVs (FCEV):** Electric energy is produced from chemical energy.

Why Are Electric Vehicles the Smart Choice?

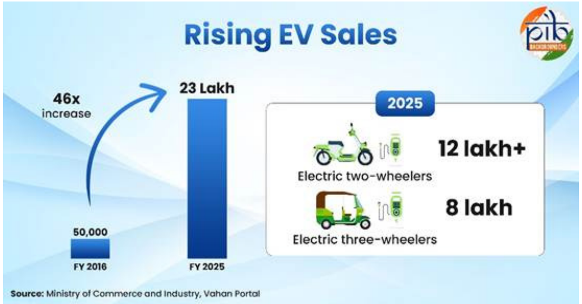
- **Cut Costs:** Lower fuel expenses and minimal maintenance.
- **Eco-Friendly:** Zero tailpipe emissions and a smaller carbon footprint.
- **Tax Perks**: Savings with lower registration fees & Government incentives.
- **Effortless Drive:** No gears or clutch-only acceleration & braking.
- **Home Charging:** Integrated home/public station charging solutions available.
- **Silent Ride:** An electric vehicle, by its very nature, doesn't have an engine. Instead, it has a motor system powered by a battery.

Last Decade of India's EV Revolution

- India's journey towards electric mobility **began in 2015** marked by the launch of the **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan** and **FAME Scheme** to incentivize the adoption of EVs.
- It was driven by clear strategic priorities like reducing the rising import bill on petroleum fuels and tackling worsening urban air pollution.
- It aimed to **lower greenhouse gas emissions** from the transport sector, which accounts for ~9% of India's total emissions.

EV Adoption in India

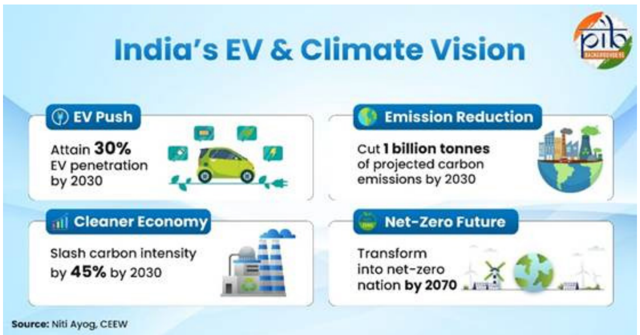
- It has seen a multifold surge, growing **from 0.08% in FY15-16 to 8.26% in FY25-26.**
  - It was driven by motorised **two-wheelers (12.8 lakh units)** and **three-wheelers (8 lakh units)** sold in 2025.



- **Exports** have risen from USD 1.2 million in 2020 to USD 84 million in 2024. Top **export destinations** included **Nepal, Indonesia and Japan.**
- In 2025, **Uttar Pradesh** emerged as the largest EV market with more than 4 lakh units, representing 18% of national EV sales.
  - It was **followed by Maharashtra** with 2.66 lakh units (12%) & **Karnataka** with 2 lakh units (9% of total sales).
- **Expanding Infrastructure**: According to **Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)**, 16,561 of the 52,718 public charging stations available as of July 2026 are equipped with fast EV charging facilities.
  - The **e-Amrit tool** helps locate charging stations based on one's location.

Future Prospects

- India's EV market, valued at **USD 3.71 billion in 2025,** is projected to grow to **USD 191.04 billion by 2034,** at a CAGR of 54.94%.
- **India aims for 30% of all vehicle sales to be electric by 2030**, aligning with the global **EV30@30 initiative.**
- The EV ecosystem is strengthened with the establishment of **1.32 million charging stations** across India by 2030.



Key Concerns Over Electric Vehicles (EVs) in India

- **High Initial Cost:** EVs are still costlier than conventional petrol/diesel vehicles. Batteries account for **35–40% of the total vehicle cost**, making EVs expensive.
- **Charging Infrastructure Gap:** Limited availability of public charging stations, especially in rural and remote areas.
- **Range Anxiety:** Many consumers worry that EVs may not have enough battery range for long-distance travel. Lack of charging stations reinforces this concern.
- **Battery Life and Replacement Cost:** Concerns about battery degradation over time. Battery replacement is expensive.
- **Dependence on Critical Minerals:** India depends on imports of lithium, cobalt, nickel, and other critical minerals.
  - Supply chain disruptions can increase battery costs and affect manufacturing.
- **Domestic Manufacturing Challenges:** India is still building indigenous battery and component manufacturing capacity.
- **Electricity Demand:** Large-scale EV adoption will increase electricity demand.
  - Requires strengthening of the power grid and promotion of renewable energy integration.
- **Environmental Concerns:** EVs have zero tailpipe emissions but battery manufacturing and disposal pose environmental challenges.
- **Battery Recycling and Disposal:** Safe recycling infrastructure is still developing. Improper disposal may create environmental and health hazards.
- **Consumer Awareness and Misconceptions:** Many consumers believe EVs have very limited range, unsafe, difficult to maintain and cannot perform in Indian conditions.
- **Financing and Insurance:** Higher upfront cost affects affordability.
- **Policy and Regulatory Challenges:** Long-term policy stability is needed to encourage investment.

Strategic Policy Interventions for India's EVs

- **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP 2020):** It outlines a strategic roadmap to accelerate the adoption and domestic manufacturing of EVs in India.

- It has the twin objective of strengthening energy security and promoting clean,sustainable mobility.
- **FAME India:** It was launched in 2015 to drive EV adoption under the NEMMP 2020 framework.
    - It offers incentives to buyers, supports creation of charging infrastructure, and manufacturing.
    - Phase I continued until March 2019, followed by Phase II, implemented over five years until April 2024.
- **National Mission on Manufacturing (NMM)**: It identifies EVs as a key **'seed' sector for innovation-led growth**. It has ambitious targets for 2035. It aims **to double the manufacturing sector's contribution** to GDP from **12.9% (2023) to 25% by 2035.**
    - It strengthens India's EV ecosystem by promoting advanced manufacturing, fostering technology development, and integrating EV production into global value chains.
- **India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) by NITI Aayog:** It is a first-of-its-kind framework. It tracks and compares the progress of States and Union Territories in advancing electric mobility.
    - It evaluates performance across 16 indicators across three pillars-**transport electrification, charging infrastructure readiness, and EV research & innovation**. This offers a clear snapshot of each region's ecosystem strength.
    - Based on scores, regions are classified as **Frontrunners** (leading with robust ecosystems)**, performers** (making progress) and **aspirants** (requiring intervention).
- **PM E-DRIVE Scheme, 2014:** It is a key initiative of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI). It aims to accelerate EV adoption through **targeted demand incentives, support for domestic manufacturing, and expansion of charging infrastructure.**
- **PM e-Bus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism (PSM) Scheme, 2024:** It provides **payment security coverage to each bus deployed for up to 12 years**.
    - A total of **10,000 electric buses** are to be deployed via the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.
- **Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India (SPMEPCI), 2024:** It **promotes electric car manufacturing. It mandates a minimum investment** of ₹4,150 crore.
    - They need to achieve at least 25% Domestic Value Addition (DVA) by year three and 50% by year five.
- **PLI-Auto Scheme**: It aims to strengthen India's manufacturing capabilities in Advanced Automotive Technology (AAT), including EVs.
    - It provides financial incentives to promote domestic manufacturing with a minimum 50% domestic value addition.
- **PLI For Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage:** It aims to promote domestic battery manufacturing.
    - It intends to **establish a cumulative ACC capacity of 50 GWh in India.** It supports development of advanced, long-range EV batteries through incentives linked to sales.
- **Low GST on EVs**: EVs in India attract a **concessional GST rate of 5%**, which applies to all electric cars, two-wheelers, and three-wheelers.

Driving Forward: India's EV Growth Outlook

- India is developing the next phases of **Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE)** norms, **CAFE III (2027–2032)** and **CAFE IV (2033–2037)**.
    - These propose **stricter CO_2 emission targets** based on the **Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP)**.
- India has entered a decisive phase of scale with demand and production incentives, localization policies, early charging infrastructure.
- It is reshaping itself from an import-dependent market into a globally competitive hub for EV production.
    - It is aligned with its strategic priorities of energy security, reduced oil imports, and achieving the **2070 net-zero vision**.

Source: PIB

THE WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2026

Context

- The World Bank has released **The World Development Report 2026.**

About

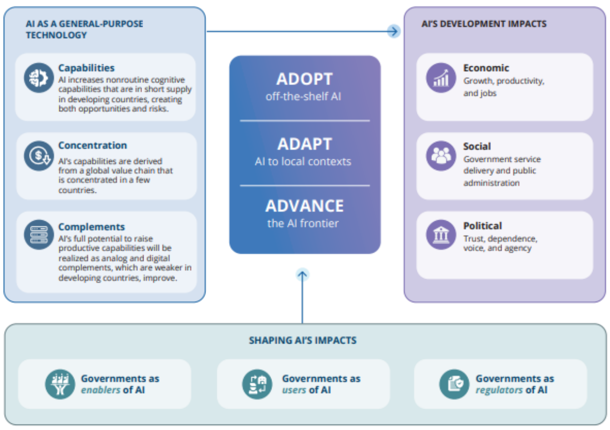
- It has been **published annually since 1978,** each report provides **in-depth analysis and policy recommendations** on a specific and important aspect of development

- **The 2026 Report** offers a clear framework to adopt, adapt, and advance for the road ahead to **help countries capture AI's benefits** without wasting scarce resources or deepening dependence on any single supplier.

Major Findings

- **Automation Risks:** Jobs in high-income countries are more than three times as likely to face automation risk from generative AI as those in low- and middle-income countries.
- **Boost in Productivity:** AI could boost productivity in more than 16% of existing jobs in developing economies, compared with more than 18% in advanced economies.
- **AI in Agriculture:** Separate research on agriculture found that AI could improve productivity and resilience, but only with supportive policies, infrastructure and equitable access.

Figure 0.1 AI's capabilities, concentration, and complements determine its economic, social, and political impacts through the pathways of adoption, adaptation, and advancement



- **Challenges:**
  - Trying to replicate the most sophisticated AI systems too early could prove expensive and ineffective.
  - Developing countries still lack many of the basics needed to use AI effectively, including reliable electricity, internet access, data systems, skills and institutions.
  - Without addressing these gaps, AI could widen the divide between rich and developing nations and increase inequality within countries.
- **Recommendations:**
  - Countries should **first adopt AI tools** that are already available, then adapt them for local needs, and only later invest in building advanced AI capabilities of their own.
  - Countries should **encourage responsible AI practices,** apply existing laws to address harms where necessary and build public trust by protecting privacy and preventing bias in AI-powered decision-making.

Source: DTE

NEWS IN SHORT

UZBEKISTAN

Context

- India and Uzbekistan have agreed to expand their strategic partnership.

About Uzbekistan

- Uzbekistan is Central Asia's most populous country, with a population of 30.8 million people.
- It shares borders with **Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan**.
- Along with Liechtenstein, it is one of the world's only two doubly landlocked countries (all its neighbours are also landlocked).
- Its economy is largely dependent on **commodity exports**, making it vulnerable to fluctuations in global commodity prices.
- **Tashkent** is the capital and largest city.
- Major rivers: **Amu Darya** and **Syr Darya**.

Source: AIR

V2V COMMUNICATION

Context

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has released **draft rules proposing mandatory Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) communication systems** in new vehicles from October 2028.

What is V2V Communication?

- V2V communication enables **nearby vehicles to exchange real-time information**, including their speed, position, direction, acceleration, etc. This information can provide advance warnings to drivers or vehicle systems in safety-critical situations, including sudden braking, forward-collision risk, unsafe lane changes and the approach of emergency vehicles.

- Unlike conventional vehicle-safety systems, which primarily **depend on onboard sensors and driver reaction**, V2V communication can provide information beyond the direct line of sight.
- It is therefore expected to **complement Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS)** and support proactive accident prevention, connected mobility and future intelligent transport applications.

Do you know?

- A total of 4,80,583 road accidents were recorded in India in 2023, resulting in 1,72,890 deaths.

Source: PIB

THE BANKERS' BOOKS EVIDENCE BILL, 2026

Context

- The Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 was passed in Lok Sabha.

About

- The Bill seeks to repeal and replace the **Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891.**
- The Act provides for certified copies of bank records to be used as evidence in legal proceedings without requiring production of the original records.

Key Provisions of the Bill

- **Admissibility of electronic records:** An electronic or digital record of a banker's book will be admissible, valid, and legally enforceable as evidence, subject to certain conditions. **These include:**
  - The said copy is a **true copy** of such entry or information, and correctly represents or is appropriately derived from such records,
  - **No unauthorised change** of data is observed or detected, and
  - **No tampering** with the system or other event which may be essential for establishing integrity and accuracy.
- **Application to other entities in the financial sector:** The Act applies to entities engaged in the business of banking and any post office savings bank or money order office. The Bill retains this.
  - It further **empowers the central government to extend the provisions of the Bill** to any entity or class of entities operating in the financial sector, by notification.

Source: IE, PRS

MSME SUSTAINABLE ZED CERTIFICATION SCHEME

In News

- The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is promoting quality-driven and environmentally sustainable manufacturing through the MSME Sustainable (Zero Defect, Zero Effect – ZED) Certification Scheme.

MSME Sustainable ZED Certification Scheme

- It encourages MSMEs to manufacture **high-quality products** while minimizing their environmental impact.
- It supports enterprises in continuously improving their technology, systems, and manufacturing practices to enhance quality, productivity, and sustainability.
- All MSMEs registered with the **UDYAM registration portal (of the MoMSME)** will be eligible to participate in MSME Sustainable (ZED) Certification and avail related benefits/incentives.

Benefits

- It offers Bronze, Silver and Gold certifications, allowing MSMEs to progressively improve their quality and sustainability standards.
- Eligible enterprises can avail financial assistance of up to 75 per cent of the cost of testing, system or product certification (up to ₹50,000), ₹2 lakh for consultancy and handholding support, and ₹3 lakh for adopting cleaner technologies, pollution-control measures and Zero Effect solutions.
- It is encouraging women entrepreneurs, with the government providing a 100 per cent subsidy on the cost of ZED certification for women-owned MSMEs since November 2023.

Source: DD

MERCHANT DISCOUNT RATE (MDR) ON UPI TRANSACTIONS

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India Governor said that "someone will have to pay the cost" of UPI transactions, which are currently free for merchants and customers.

What is Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)?

- Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) is the **charge paid by the merchants to banks/payment service providers** for digital payments transactions.
- It is generally calculated as a **percentage of the transaction value** and is shared among banks, payment service providers, and payment networks.
- To promote digital payments, the Government has recommended Zero MDR on UPI and RuPay debit card transactions from January 2020.

Why is MDR on UPI Being Considered?

- UPI has become the world's largest real-time payment system and so operational costs have gone up sharply.
- **Banks and payment service providers incur cost on:**
  - Payments processing and settlement.
  - Cybersecurity and fraud management.
  - Maintenance of network and server infrastructure.
  - Innovation and technological advancements.
- The current paradigm is financially challenging because only half of these costs are covered by government incentive payments.
- The UPI platform currently costs about **₹0.4-1 per transaction** to operate and maintain and there were around **24,161.69 crore UPI transactions** conducted in 2025-26.

Source: TH

CREATORS ECONOMY OF INDIA

Context

- PM Modi said that India has an extraordinary pool of creative talent, which can be leveraged to strengthen the country's position as a global hub for **content creation.**

What is Creators Economy (Orange Economy)?

- Refers to the **ecosystem** where individuals (content creators) **use digital platforms** to create, distribute, and monetise content, skills, or influence directly to audiences often without **traditional intermediaries.**
- **Key Components of a Creators Economy:**
  - **Creators:** YouTubers, podcasters, bloggers, influencers, educators, gamers, artists.
  - **Platforms:** YouTube, Instagram, X etc.
  - **Monetisation Tools:** Ads, brand sponsorships, subscriptions, tips, NFTs, merchandise.
  - **Audiences/Communities:** Followers, subscribers, niche communities.
  - **Enablers:** Payment gateways, analytics tools, AI tools, creator management agencies.

Steps Taken by the Government to Promote Creative Economy

- **The World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025:** The primary objective of WAVES was to give a fillip to India's orange economy by integrating content, creativity and culture into a structured engine of economic growth and global influence.
- **Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT):** To institutionalise skilling and innovation, the Government has established the IICT, Mumbai as a National Centre of Excellence for **Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR).**
- **Strategic Integration of Creators and Digital Talent:** Prasar Bharati is actively integrating digital creators into public service broadcasting to foster a more inclusive digital economy.
  - **The "Creator's Corner,"** which airs on **DD News and DD National**, provides national exposure to micro-influencers and emerging voices.

Source: AIR, PIB

CLOUDED LEOPARD CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN (CAP)

In News

- Recently, the **Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)** was launched on the occasion of **International Clouded Leopard Day (4th August).**

Clouded Leopard (Neofelis Nebulosa)

- **Characteristics**: It is a medium-sized, highly arboreal wild cat, known for its large cloud-shaped markings, long canine teeth, and exceptionally long tail.
  - It is a **nocturnal hunter** that feeds on a variety of arboreal and terrestrial prey, including deer, primates, porcupines, pangolins and squirrels.
- **Habitat and Distribution**: It is found mainly in primary tropical forests but also in secondary

forests, dry forests, mangroves and above 3,500 m in the Himalayas.

- It occurs from the Himalayan foothills of Nepal across Mainland Southeast Asia to China.
- It is **extinct in Taiwan, and in Vietnam, China, and Bangladesh** its populations are critically low and close to local extinction (extirpation).

- **Threats:** Habitat loss and fragmentation caused by rapid deforestation and infrastructure development, but the biggest drivers of population decline remain illegal hunting and snaring for the wildlife trade.
- **Conservation Actions:** It is included on CITES Appendix I
  - The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species lists Clouded Leopard as Vulnerable.

Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)

- It is prepared under the **Government of India–GEF–UNDP initiative.**
- It provides a **comprehensive framework** for securing habitats, restoring forest connectivity, strengthening scientific monitoring, and empowering local communities for conservation of the species.
- The action plan identifies **14 priority conservation landscapes** across Northeast India, along with landscape-scale habitat restoration and corridor conservation to strengthen connectivity between forest habitats.

Source: PIB

■■■■