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Time: 45 Min

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LS PASSED TRIBUNALS REFORMS BILL, 2026

Context

- Recently, the Lok Sabha recently passed **Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026** proposing a **National Tribunals Commission (NTC)** to supervise recruitment, administration and functioning of tribunals.

About Tribunals & Why Reforms Matter?

- Tribunals are **quasi-judicial tribunals** designed to adjudicate speciality disputes and take the burden off the regular courts.
- They have expanded greatly in several fields such as taxation, company law, ecology, military forces and administrative concerns.
- The Supreme Court has repeatedly emphasised that **'Tribunalisation'** cannot compromise the constitutional principles of **separation of powers, judicial independence and access to justice**.

Constitutional Provisions Related to Tribunals in India

- The constitutional framework for tribunals is primarily contained in **Part XIV-A**, inserted by the **42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976**.
  - It contains **Articles 323A and 323B**.
- **Article 323A (Tribunals of Administrative Officers): Only Parliament** can make laws under Article 323A.
  - **Parliament** may constitute a **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), Administrative Tribunals for the States and Joint Administrative Tribunals** for two or more States.
- **Article 323B (Tribunals for Other topics): Parliament or a State Legislature** may, by law, arrange for the establishment of Tribunals for the adjudication of topics mentioned.
  - These are taxation, foreign exchange, import and export, industrial and labour issues, land reforms, ceiling on urban property, elections to Parliament and State Legislatures, necessary products, rent and tenancy matters.
- **Article 136 (Supreme Court's Jurisdiction):** The Supreme Court may **grant special permission** to appeal against any judgement or decision passed by **any Court or Tribunal in India**, subject to the constitutional limits.
  - Tribunals are therefore **not wholly alien to the judicial system.**
- **Article 226 & 227 (Supervisory Power of High Court):** The High Courts exercise the power of **judicial review and superintendence** which is a vital constitutional safeguard.

> **Do You Know?**
> - In L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India (1997), the Supreme Court held that:
>   - Judicial review under **Articles 226/227 and Article 32** is part of the **basic structure**.
>   - Tribunals can perform a **supplementary role**, but cannot replace the constitutional jurisdiction of High Courts and the Supreme Court.
>   - Decisions of tribunals are subject to scrutiny by the **Division Bench of the concerned High Court**.

- **Article 50 (Separation of Judiciary from Executive):** It instructs the State to take measures to separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the State.

Key Provisions of the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026

- **National Tribunals Commission (NTC)**: It was proposed in the **Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026** as an **overarching institutional mechanism** for tribunals.
  - It will consist of a **Chairperson, two judicial members, and two technical members**.
  - The Commission will **conduct selection** of Chairpersons and Members of tribunals, review the performance of tribunal members, **oversee inquiries into complaints** against members, maintain a **National Tribunals Data Grid** containing case-related information, and oversee administrative functioning of tribunals.
- **Coverage Tribunals/Authorities:** The framework covers **16 tribunals and authorities**, including Central and State Administrative Tribunals; Securities Appellate Tribunal; Debts Recovery Tribunal; Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal; Armed Forces Tribunal; National Green Tribunal; National Company Law Appellate Tribunal; National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission; and Income-tax Appellate Tribunal.
  - It has stated that the Bill **does not alter the jurisdiction** of tribunals under their respective parent Acts.

- **Repeal of the 2021 Act:** The Bill seeks to repeal the **Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021**, following its invalidation by the Supreme Court in 2025 on grounds including **separation of powers and judicial independence**.
    - It contains **saving provisions** to protect existing appointments and selection processes initiated under the 2021 framework until the NTC is established.

Related Issues & Concerns

- **Judicial independence:** The main issue is the influence of the executive on appointments, tenure and terms of service.
    - Excessive executive power may erode the independence of Tribunals.
- **Separation of Powers:** In the Madras Bar Association cases, the Supreme Court has highlighted that the ability of the Parliament to create tribunals cannot result in the institutions being effectively controlled by the administration.
- **Vacancies and Pendency:** Due to the ongoing vacancies of Chairpersons and members, the cases might pile up, which defeats the fundamental purpose of setting up tribunals.
- **Jurisdictional Overlap:** Several tribunals and appeal procedures may lead to jurisdictional complexity that may lead to an increase, rather than a decrease, in litigation.
- **Quality of Technical Members:** Finding the right mix of judicial and technical experience remains an ongoing challenge. Technical members should have relevant competence, but not at the expense of adjudicatory independence.
- **Institutional Autonomy:** Institutional autonomy can be influenced by dependence on ministries for cash, infrastructure and personnel.
- **Accessibility:** The concentration of tribunals in a small number of physical places can be expensive for litigants, especially individuals and small organisations.
- **Accountability versus Independence:** A tribunal must be accountable for its performance yet not open to executive intervention. This requires transparent appraisal and grievance systems.
- **Parliamentary Scrutiny:** The reported proceedings of the Lok Sabha where important institutional reforms were enacted without substantive debate, raises questions about legislative deliberation and scrutiny.
- **Risk of 'Tribunalisation':** Over-reliance on tribunals could lead to fragmentation of the justice system. Tribunals must therefore bolster the constitutional court system, not weaken it.

Constitutional Significance of Tribunals

- **Access to justice:** Tribunals provide specialised and reasonably accessible forums for conflict settlement, promoting the ideals of **Article 14 and Article 21.**
- **Judicial independence:** The operation of the courts must be in accordance with the constitutional principle of **separation of powers** and independence of adjudicatory bodies.
- **Judicial review**: The decisions of Tribunals are nevertheless open to review by the constitutional courts, particularly under **Articles 226/227 and Article 136.**
- **Specialisation:** They combine legal skills with **technical/domain knowledge to facilitate adjudication.**
- **Checks and Balances:** An independent tribunal system prohibits excessive concentration of adjudicatory functions in the executive.

Governance Significance

- **Lowers the burden on courts:** Tribunals can divert specialised matters away from High Courts and subordinate courts.
- **Faster dispute resolution:** Specialised processes may help to cut delays and procedural complexity.
- **Expert decision-making:** Technical members provide expertise in areas including taxation, environment, corporate law and telecommunications.
- **Better regulatory governance:** Effective tribunals raise the credibility of sectoral regulators and economic institutions.
- **Data-driven administration:** A **National Tribunals Data Grid** can help monitor vacancies, pendency, disposal rates and institutional performance.
- **Institutional coordination:** A National Tribunals Commission can help overcome the fragmented administration of the many tribunals.

Financial/Economic Significance

- **Cost-effective justice:** A cheaper justice Specialised adjudication can cut the economic cost of long, drawn-out litigation.

- **Ease of doing business:** Faster settlement of commercial, tax, insolvency and regulatory challenges increases corporate certainty.
- **Investment climate:** Predictable dispute resolution builds investor trust.
- **Administrative efficiency:** Duplication in recruitment, infrastructure and administration can be eliminated through a unified administrative set-up.
- **Fiscal impact:** The proposed NTC is anticipated to cost around ₹27.14 crore, although the better functioning of tribunals could lead to long-term efficiency gains.
  - Recurring expenditure is expected to rise by **10% in each of the second and third years** over the preceding year.

Way Forward

- Tribunal reform should balance **specialised justice with constitutional independence**.
  - The NTC must have transparent selection methods, significant judicial representation, institutional autonomy and effective accountability systems.
- A correct implementation can make tribunals more **efficient, transparent and accessible** while maintaining consistency with the constitutional framework of separation of powers.

Source: TH

REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE ON EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

Context

- The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce, presented its 201st Report titled "Doing Business in India: The Way Forward" to both Houses of Parliament.

What is Ease of Doing Business

- Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) refers to the extent to which the regulatory, administrative and institutional environment enables businesses to start, operate, expand and close with minimum cost, time and procedural hurdles.

India's Progress in Ease of Doing Business

- India improved its rank in the **World Bank's Doing Business Report** from **142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019,** reflecting significant improvements in the regulatory environment.
- India's position in the **IMD World Competitiveness Ranking** improved from 43 in 2021 to 41 in 2025.
- India has consistently been placed in **Group A of the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index**, indicating advanced digital governance capabilities.
- The Government's Reducing Compliance Burden (RCB) initiative has resulted in more than 47,000 compliances being reduced, simplified, digitised or decriminalised across Central and State legislations.

Initiatives taken by Government

- **National Single Window System (NSWS):** It Provides an integrated platform for businesses to apply for various Central and State approvals.
  - The State-level single-window systems have been integrated with NSWS through API-based linkages.
- **Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP):** BRAP promotes competitive federalism by encouraging States and UTs to undertake business reforms.
  - It seeks to improve the regulatory environment through reforms in areas such as approvals, inspections and business services.
- **Jan Vishwas Reforms** have decriminalised hundreds of minor business-related offences. These reforms have reduced the fear of criminal prosecution for procedural violations and encouraged voluntary compliance.
- **Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS)** has improved liquidity for MSMEs by enabling faster realisation of payments from corporate buyers and government entities.
- **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan:** The initiative promotes integrated infrastructure planning across sectors.
  - It reduces project delays and improves coordination among government agencies.

Challenges

- **Uneven State-Level Performance:** The implementation of reforms varies across States and between major industrial centres and rural areas. This creates an uneven business environment across the country.
- **Infrastructure Bottlenecks:** Regulatory and infrastructure constraints continue to increase logistics costs as gaps remain in multimodal connectivity, warehousing, cold chains, cargo handling and last-mile connectivity.

- **Limited Access to Credit:** MSMEs, start-ups and first-generation entrepreneurs face high documentation requirements, collateral constraints and uneven credit availability.
- **Fragmented Regulatory Framework:** Businesses continue to face multiple licences, approvals and overlapping inspections by different departments. Parallel inspections under different laws result in duplication of effort.

Recommendations of the Committee

- The Department may strengthen the **Regulatory Compliance Portal** by integrating real-time grievance redressal and performance metrics to ensure effective implementation of compliance reforms at the ground level.
- The Committee recommends **rationalization and consolidation of regulatory frameworks** by adopting risk-based regulations and increasing the use of self-certification and third-party certification.
- Ensure **effective implementation of Jan Vishwas reforms** and replace criminal penalties for minor administrative errors with proportionate civil penalties.

Source: PIB

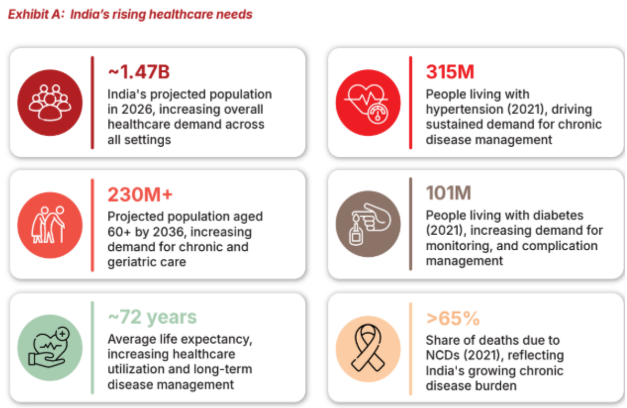
PAPER ON AI IN HEALTHCARE

Context

- The Union Health Minister released the knowledge paper, **'AI in MedTech: Revolutionizing Healthcare Through Artificial Intelligence',** at India Medical Device 2026.

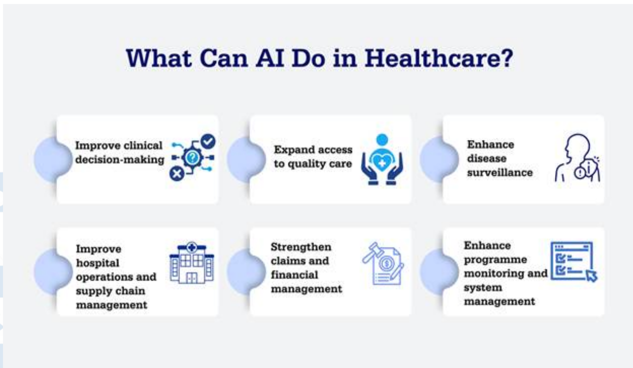
Key Highlights:

- The report outlines **five key priorities** for **accelerating the responsible adoption of AI in healthcare:**
    - AI-ready data and evidence, lifecycle-based regulation and reimbursement mechanisms, to scaling up AI-enabled diagnostics and strengthening collaboration across government, industry, healthcare and academia.
- **It highlights India's opportunity** to leverage its digital public infrastructure, software capabilities, clinical diversity and growing MedTech manufacturing base to emerge as a global leader in responsible AI-enabled medical technologies.



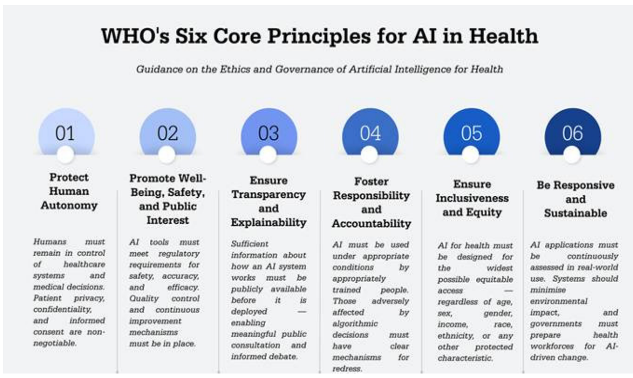
Use of AI in Healthcare

- **AI-based tools** can diagnose and predict diseases, streamline clinical practices, improve hospital management, assist in drug discoveries and aid in healthcare research.



Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR's) four priorities for AI in Health

- Collating quality data across research institutions.
- Forging private sector partnerships.
- Generating real-world evidence through ICMR's network of institutes.
- Urgently integrating health and medical professionals into the AI workforce pipeline.



Significance of the use of AI in Healthcare

- **Improved Diagnostic Accuracy:** AI can analyse large medical datasets and imaging scans quickly, helping doctors detect diseases at an earlier and more accurate stage.

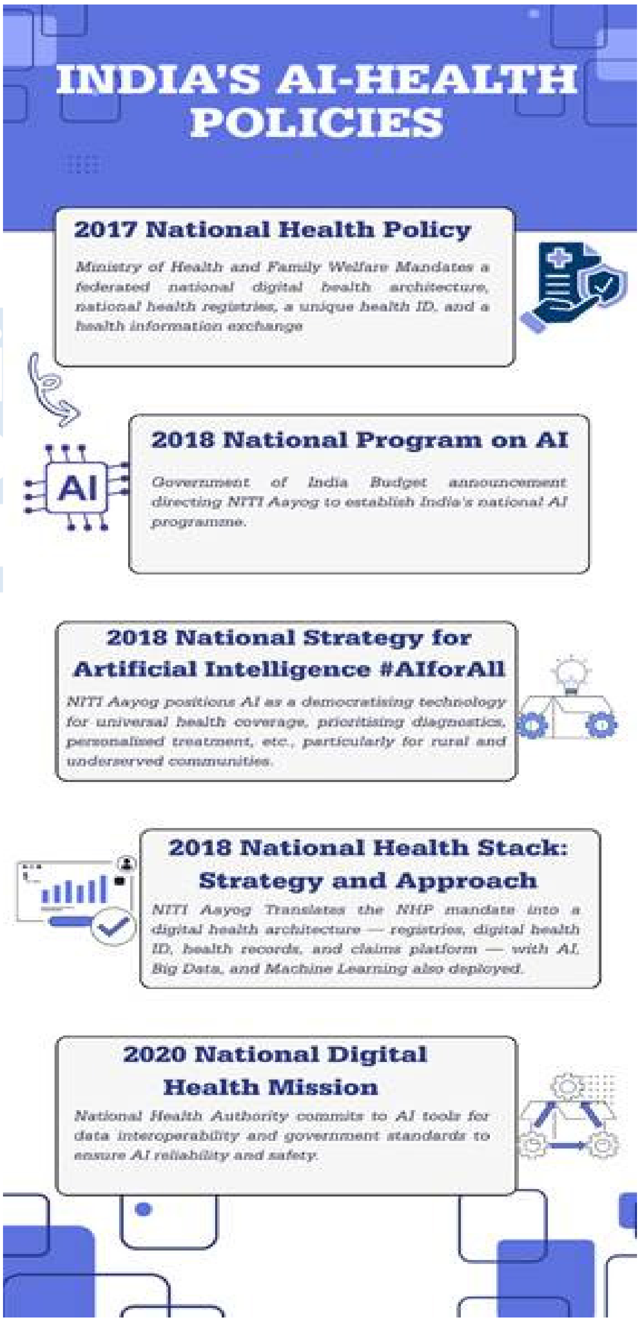
- **Enhanced Efficiency and Time Saving:** AI automates routine tasks allowing healthcare professionals to focus more on patient care.
- **Personalised Treatment:** AI can analyse genetic information, lifestyle data, and medical history to develop tailored treatment plans for individual patients.
- **Early Disease Prediction and Prevention:** AI models can identify patterns in health data and predict potential diseases, enabling preventive healthcare.
- **Improved Drug Discovery and Research:** AI accelerates the process of drug discovery and clinical trials by analysing complex biological data, reducing time and cost in developing new medicines.
- **Better Healthcare Accessibility:** AI-powered telemedicine and virtual health assistants can extend healthcare services to remote and underserved areas, improving access to medical care.
- **Support in Public Health Management:** AI helps governments and health organisations analyse large datasets for disease surveillance, outbreak prediction, and policy planning.

Concerns

- **Risk of Data Leakage through AI Prompts:** Healthcare workers may unknowingly include patient details in prompts or uploaded documents while using Generative AI tools, leading to exposure on external servers.
- **Growing Cybersecurity Threats in Healthcare:** The healthcare sector is already a prime target for cybercriminals, and increased digitalisation and AI integration further expand the attack surface.
- **Lack of Awareness and Training:** Healthcare staff may lack adequate cybersecurity training, increasing the chances of unintentional data exposure.
- **Regulatory and Ethical Concerns:** Breaches of patient data can violate data protection laws and ethical obligations of medical confidentiality, undermining trust in healthcare systems.

India's AI-Health Policies

- **Strategy for AI in Healthcare for India (SAHI):** SAHI works as a recommendatory national framework on the way AI can be integrated into healthcare services.
    - Launched as a national framework, SAHI outlines a structured roadmap for integrating AI into healthcare delivery across India.
- **BODH (Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI):** It was launched during the AI Summit, provides a structured mechanism for testing and validating Health AI solutions before deployment at scale.
    - It was developed by the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur in collaboration with the National Health Authority.



Source: AIR

GOVT. OPPOSES INCOME-BASED CREAMY LAYER IN SC/ST QUOTAS

Context

- The Union Govt. has **pushed back against the demand to introduce the "creamy layer" concept for reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).**

About

- **Background:** Petitions were filed in the Supreme Court **seeking a creamy-layer exclusion within the reserved categories** of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) as in the Other Backward Classes (OBC).
- The court had also asked the Union government to **file an Action Taken Report after the 2024** Supreme Court decision that paved the way for sub-categorisation among SCs and STs.

Government's Stand

- **Historical Disadvantages:** SCs face **historical disadvantages** stemming from the practice of untouchability.
  - Similarly, **STs** are identified by their **"distinct cultures, geographical isolation and backwardness".**
  - In contrast, **OBCs** are identified primarily through a **combination of social, educational and economic disadvantages.**
  - **The main objective of SC and ST reservations** is to achieve social equality and justice, overcome historical discrimination and ensure inclusive participation in public life.
- **Related Supreme Court's Verdict:** In the **1992 Indra Sawhney judgment**, which upheld the implementation of the **Mandal Commission report.**
  - The verdict introduced the **creamy layer test,** which was confined to OBCs, stating that it "**has no relevance in the case of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes.**"
  - The government also referred to the **2008 Ashoka Kumar Thakur case,** which clarified that the **creamy layer principle does not apply to SCs and STs.**
- **Separation of Power: Under Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution,** the **President notifies the initial lists of SCs and STs.**
  - Once notified, **any inclusion or exclusion from these lists** may only be done by an Act of Parliament.
  - It is not open to State Governments or courts or tribunals or any other authority to modify, amend or alter these lists.

Reservation in India

- As per existing instructions, reservation is provided to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) at the rate of **15%, 7.5% and 27%, respectively,** in case of direct recruitment on all India basis by open competition.
- The **Constitution (103rd Amendment) Act 2019** enables the State (i.e., both the Central and State Governments) to provide **reservation to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of the society.**

Creamy Layer Principle

- It is a concept used to ensure that reservations in educational institutions and government jobs are extended to those **who are economically and socially disadvantaged within a certain group.**
  - It aims to **prevent the more affluent or advantaged members** of a reserved category from availing themselves of these benefits.
- **Origin:** The concept was first articulated by the **Supreme Court of India** in the **Indra Sawhney case (1992),** also known as the **Mandal Commission case.**
  - The Court's ruling emphasized that within the OBC (Other Backward Classes) category, those who are **relatively more privileged should not benefit from reservations.**
- **Impact:** By applying the creamy layer principle, the government aims to make its affirmative action policies more effective and equitable, ensuring that those who are most in need receive the support intended for them.

Constitutional Provisions Related to Reservation

- **Article 16:** It provides for **equality of opportunity** for all citizens but as an exception the State can provide for reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class that is not adequately represented in the state services.
- **Article 16 (4A):** Provides that the State can make any provision for reservation in matters of promotion in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes if they are not adequately represented in the services under the State.
- **Article 335:** It recognises that special measures need to be adopted for considering the claims of

SCs and STs to services and posts, in order to bring them at par.

- **103 Amendment of the Constitution of India:** Introduced **10% reservation** for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of society.

Supreme Court Judgement on Sub-Categorisation of Scheduled Castes (SC)

- **In 2024,** the Supreme Court **upheld the validity of sub-classification within Scheduled Caste categories** in a 6:1 majority, overruling the five-judge bench decision in **E.V. Chinaiah v State of Andhra Pradesh (2004).**
  - It held that the criteria for identifying the creamy layer among SCs/STs should differ from those used for the Other Backward Castes (OBCs).
- **Argument of SC in 2024 Judgement:**
  - **Equality under Article 14** means treating equals equally, but allows the State to classify groups that are differently placed.
    - If a reserved category (like Scheduled Castes) is not uniform inside, the State can create smaller groups within it for fair distribution of benefits.
  - **Not Homogeneous:** The Presidential list is a legal fiction, used to identify disadvantaged groups, not a uniform class.
    - Inclusion in the SC list does not bar further classification for targeted benefits.
- **The SC held that the Sub-classification must be based on:**
  - Quantifiable data;
  - Proof of greater disadvantage;
  - Evidence of inadequate and ineffective representation in public services.
  - States must avoid arbitrary classification — must show rationale and empirical backing.
  - Effective representation, not just numerical presence, is key.

Way Ahead

- **Within Constitutional Boundaries:** Ensure sub-classification stays within Articles 14, 15(4), 16(4), and does not alter the Presidential List under Article 341.
- **Evaluate Creamy Layer Applicability Carefully:** If applied to SC/ST, set separate criteria from OBCs, ensuring it does not dilute historical safeguards for these groups.
- **Strengthen Social Uplift Measures:** Complement reservations with targeted education, skill development, entrepreneurship support, and anti-discrimination enforcement.
- **Promote Social Cohesion:** Accompany policy changes with awareness drives to prevent divisions within SC communities and maintain the spirit of collective upliftment.

Source: IE

GOOGLE'S AI SATELLITE IMAGES RAISES SAFETY CONCERNS

In News

- Google's AI "Create Image" feature in Google Earth was taken down within 24 hours of its release.

About Google Earth's AI feature

- In July 2026, Google announced an AI image generation feature in Google Earth based on its Nano Banana tech.
- It enables users to edit satellite images by inserting objects based on text prompts.
- It was meant for things such as historical recreations, real-estate mock-ups, educational infographics, and architectural visualisations.

Reasons for Pulling Down

- Google pulled back on the feature after users generated images that seemed to violate its policies.
- Users and researchers created deepfake satellite images of terrorist attacks, humanitarian crises, industrial accidents, and environmental destruction.
- The incident raised alarms that safeguards on the feature were too easily bypassed, possibly opening the door to the proliferation of convincing misinformation.
- The images produced were labelled as AI-generated and were not shown in the main Google Earth experience

Impacts and Risks of fake AI satellite images

- **Misinformation**: Deepfakes can be used to deceive people about conflicts, disasters, humanitarian crises, or environmental degradation and to become viral on social media platforms.
- **Fraud**: Real estate fraud might be feasible when geographic or property information can be changed.

- **Poor protection**: AI watermarks are easy to remove, making it hard for normal people to spot fraudulent pictures.
- **Academic integrity:** Such images could compromise the credibility of research and the scientific method.
- **Security risk**: AI-generated fake satellite images could pose a national security risk by providing false information about military equipment, base activities, and border deployments**.**
  - This is expensive and takes up valuable time and resources, but it buys time for intelligence services to investigate and for a decisive response in a crisis.

Way Ahead

- Governments must require strong technical protections such as **cryptographic watermarking** to verify images to counter the threat of geospatial synthetic media.
- Equally important is the need to modernise cybersecurity laws to classify malicious geospatial deepfakes as direct threats to national security.
- Defence and intelligence agencies need to use AI-enabled detection tools to quickly detect manipulated satellite data and synthetic terrain.
- Global standards needed for editing pictures of sensitive places like war zones and nuclear installations.

Source:TH

NEWS IN SHORT

RBI'S NEW LOAN RECOVERY RULES

In News

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a **comprehensive set of rules governing how commercial banks** recover unpaid loans, significantly revising the conduct expected from banks and outsourced recovery agents.

About RBI's New Loan Recovery Rules

- It is designed to r**egulate loan recovery practices** and shield borrowers from harassment, while allowing banks to recover genuine dues.
  - It will start on January 1, 2027.
- It also introduces **India's first detailed regulatory framework** for technology-based restrictions on mobile phones financed through bank loans.

RBI rule	What it means for borrowers
Personal devices	Cannot be disabled for recovery of unrelated loans
Financed devices	Restrictions may apply, subject to RBI safeguards
Notice period	The borrower must receive due notice before restrictions
30 days past due	Device restrictions cannot begin before this stage
60 days past due	Full restrictions may be imposed as per the loan agreement
Essential functions	Incoming calls, SMS and emergency SOS must remain available
Personal data	Contacts, photos, SMS, call logs and location history cannot be accessed for recovery

Provisions

- **No device locking:** Banks cannot remotely lock or restrict borrowers' mobile phones, tablets or laptops to recover dues, unless the loan was specifically taken to finance that device.
- **No harassment:** Recovery agents shall not abuse, threaten, intimidate, publicly shame or personally attack borrowers.
- **Privacy Protection:** Banks/recovery agents cannot use a borrower's contacts, photos, messages, call records or location data for recovery.
- **Data sharing is limited** to recovery agents or employees to the degree necessary for **debt recovery.**
- EMIs and unpaid debt and interest not waived by rules; Borrowers still accountable.
- Defaults still affect **legal and credit score implications.**.

Goals

- The objective is to make the debt recovery procedure fair, transparent and regulated, and not through harassment, threats or abuse of technology and personal data.

Source:IE

10 YEARS OF GOVERNMENT E-MARKETPLACE

Context

- **The Government e Marketplace (GeM)** completed **ten years** of operations on 9 August 2026.

Government e-Marketplace

- GeM is a one stop portal **to facilitate online procurement** of **common use Goods & Services** required by various **Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs.**

- It was launched in **2016**, and is operated by the **GeM SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle)**, a **100% government-owned company** under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry.**
- The purchases through GeM by Government users have been authorized and made **mandatory by the Ministry of Finance** in **2017.**
- **Core Principles of GeM:**

Transparency	Fairness	Inclusiveness
Relevant information on sellers, goods, and services shall be easy to find and readily available for users.	GeM allow sellers, big and small, to gain direct access to Government buyers.	All sellers interested in conducting business with the Government shall be welcomed on the platform

Performance of GeM

- The platform has facilitated a cumulative **Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of over ₹20 lakh crore** through more than 3.78 crore orders.
    - The platform took **more than eight years to achieve its first ₹10 lakh crore in cumulative GMV,** the next ₹10 lakh crore milestone was reached in **less than two years.**
- **Participation:** The number of profile-completed sellers has increased from 3,339 to 25.45 lakh, while primary buyer organisations have grown from 1,707 to 1.37 lakh.
- **GeM now digitises the entire public procurement lifecycle** and deploys Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) tools to identify suspected cartelisation, collusion and order splitting.

Source: PIB

NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT SCHEME WEB PORTAL

Context

- The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has launched an **upgraded version of the National Youth Parliament Scheme web portal, known as NYPS 2.0.**

About

- The National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS) is an initiative of the **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.**
- It is aimed at **promoting democratic values, parliamentary practices, and constitutional awareness** among young people.
- Unlike the previous version, which was limited to students of recognized institutions only, **NYPS 2.0 is open to all educational institutions, groups and citizens across the country.**
- **Web Portal:** The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs launched the web portal of the NYPS in **2019.**
    - **Aim:** To expand the outreach of the Youth Parliament Programme of the Ministry to all the recognized educational institutions of the country.
    - **NYPS 2.0 has been introduced so that all the citizens of the country can participate on the portal through**: Institution Participation; Group Participation and Individual Participation.

Source: PIB

MODIFIED MIX SEAL SURFACING PLUS (MSS+)

In News

- CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI) showcased its indigenous **Modified Mix Seal Surfacing Plus (MSS+) Technology** to the Rajasthan Government, highlighting its potential for **sustainable and cost-effective road construction and maintenance.**

Modified Mix Seal Surfacing Plus (MSS+)

- It is a **low-emission technology** for sustainable road construction and maintenance
- It is developed indigenously by the **CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRI), New Delhi.**
- It offers a cost-effective, durable, and environmentally friendly alternative to conventional hot mix asphalt using a custom bitumen emulsion.
- It **eliminates the need for pre-heating of aggregates and binders.** This drastically reduces carbon emissions and overall building costs.

Instances of Usage

- MSS+ has already been proven successful with excellent field performance on more than 100 kilometres of roads in Uttar Pradesh.
- It is now being demonstrated to the Government of Rajasthan in Jaipur and is gaining momentum as a critical solution for climate-resilient, sustainable road infrastructure across the country.

Source: PIB

2026 DIRAC MEDAL

Context

- Indian physicist Deepak Dhar has been honored with the **2026 Dirac Medal** for his remarkable contributions to the realm of **statistical mechanics.**
    - Dhar shares the award with Bernard Derrida, Marc Mézard and Haim Sompolinsky.

About Dirac Medal

- The Dirac Medal is awarded annually by the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in honour of physicist **Paul Dirac**. The medalists also receive a prize of **US$5,000**.
- Instituted in **1985**, the award has over the years been associated with several prominent figures in theoretical physics, including **Stephen Hawking**.
- The Dirac Medal is **not awarded to Nobel Laureates**, Fields Medallists, or Wolf Foundation Prize winners, although many Dirac Medallists have proceeded to win these prestigious prizes.

Source: ET

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