

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS OF FOOD LOSS AND WASTE (IDAFWL)

Context

- The International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste is observed every year on **September 29** to promote awareness and collective action to reduce food loss and waste.

Food Loss and Food Waste

- Food loss** refers to the reduction in the quantity or quality of food during production, post-harvest handling, storage, processing and transportation, before it reaches retail.
- Food waste** refers to food discarded at the retail, food-service and household levels, including food that is still suitable for consumption.

Status of food wastage in India

- As per UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2024**, the estimated food wastage in India in 2022 is 55 kg/capita/year in India, lower than the global average of 79 kg/capita/year.
- Concern:** India ranks **102 out of 123** countries in the **Global Hunger Index 2025**.
 - Around **12%** of India's population is **undernourished**, which is approximately **~170–175 million** people.
- Globally **1.05 billion tonnes** of food is wasted each year. Around **60%** of food waste occurs at the household level, followed by **food services (28%)** and **retail (12%)**.

Impact of Food Loss and Waste

- Nutritional security:** Food losses diminish the food available for consumption and unnecessary waste aggravates food insecurity and hampers efforts to promote nutrition.
- Economic losses:** Post-harvest losses affect farmers' incomes, raise the expenses of the supply chain and reduce the returns on investments in agricultural production.
- Environmental degradation:** Food loss and waste also means loss of land, water, energy, fertilisers and other resources utilised in its production.
- Climate change:** Decomposing organic waste in landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas, contributing to global warming.

Challenges in Tackling Food Loss

- Inadequate infrastructure:** Gaps in cold chains, storage, transport and processing increase post-harvest losses.
- Data gaps:** Limited data on retail, food-service and household waste hinders effective policymaking.
- Limited finance:** High costs and inadequate credit restrict adoption of modern loss-reduction technologies.
- Fragmented approach:** Multiple sectors and institutions lead to uncoordinated interventions.
- Poor waste segregation:** Mixed waste reduces the potential for composting, biogas and resource recovery.

Government Initiatives to Reduce Food Waste

- Food Security and Distribution:** The **Public Distribution System** ensures the distribution of subsidised food grains to vulnerable populations.
 - The **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana** has expanded food access during times of crisis and economic distress.
- Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF):** Provides medium-to-long-term debt financing for post-harvest management projects, including warehouses, silos, and cold storage.
- The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana** aimed at creating modern infrastructure for food processing and preservation.
 - Mega Food Parks:** Clusters that link agricultural production to markets through high-tech supply chains.
 - Integrated Cold Chain:** Providing preservation facilities like refrigerated transport and cold storage to reduce spoilage of perishables.
 - Operation Greens:** Focused on stabilizing the supply and reducing waste of crops like Tomato, Onion, and Potato (TOP).
- Market Reforms:** The **e-NAM** facilitates better price discovery and reduces inefficiencies in agricultural markets.
- Measuring Food Loss:** India has conducted **three nationally representative post-harvest loss assessments**, covering 45, 45 and 54 commodities during **2005–07, 2012–14 and 2020–22, respectively**.

- These assessments, conducted by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)**, provide evidence on losses across the agricultural supply chain, from farms to retail.

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** and the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** are working to connect food-loss hotspots with climate-resilient technologies and facilitate financing for small and medium enterprises.

Global Best Practices

Action at scale is possible!

Japan: 31% reduction

- Mandatory reporting of food waste from large businesses
- Industry reduction targets
- Effective animal feed diversion
- Public awareness ('No-foodloss')



See: <https://www.moff.go.jp/en/policies/emu/recycle.html>

Per capita, 2008-2020, household, food service and retail.

Netherlands: Reductions of 23% at consumer & 17% retail level

- A national consumer activation campaign with 150 partners (public and private). "Food waste free week" organized annually.
- Food Waste Free United Foundation - voluntary agreement initiated by the Dutch government, Wageningen University & Research (WUR), the Dutch Nutrition Centre and 25 private sector organisations in 2017.

United Kingdom: 18% reduction

- Voluntary reporting and engagement through *Courtauld Commitment* Public-Private Partnership – **retail 26% reduction**
Manufacturers 34%
- Product- and sector-specific best practice guidance
- Redistribution working group
- Public awareness ('Love Food, Hate Waste')



See: <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.org.uk/baking-action/food-drink/actions/action-on-food-waste>

Per capita, 2007-2021, household, food service, retail, manufacture



Way Ahead

- India's food wastage is a symptom of systemic inefficiencies in the production, distribution and use of food while hunger remains.
- Addressing this issue is essential for **improving food security, resource efficiency, and sustainability**.
- It is also critical for achieving **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** and **SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**, making food waste reduction a key developmental priority.

Source: TH

INDIA'S EMERGING PHARMACEUTICAL OPPORTUNITY IN RARE-DISEASE DRUGS

Context

- The growing burden of rare diseases has highlighted the need to strengthen India's rare-disease pharmaceutical ecosystem and leverage its capabilities in affordable drug manufacturing.

What are Rare Diseases?

- Rare diseases are conditions that occur infrequently within a population.

- They are characterized by three key markers: Total number of people with the disease, Prevalence and Availability /Non-availability of treatment options.

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** defines a rare disease as a condition that affects a small percentage of the population, typically fewer than **1 in 1,000** to 2,000 people.
- There are around **8,000 rare diseases globally**, while 1,004 rare genetic disorders have been reported in India.
- Drugs developed to treat rare diseases are called **orphan drugs**.

The Global Orphan Drug Market

- The **US Orphan Drug Act, 1983**, introduced financial and regulatory incentives for developing drugs for rare diseases.
- The United States had approved only **38 orphan drugs** before the Act, compared with **1,122 approvals by 2022**.
- Despite these incentives, the **high cost of research, development and treatment** continues to restrict patient access.

Challenges in Developing Rare-Disease Drugs

- **Commercial incentives:** The small number of patients suffering from individual rare diseases **restricts the potential market for their medicines**, reducing the commercial incentives for pharmaceutical companies to invest in research and development.
- **Clinical trials:** Identifying sufficiently large patient cohorts is difficult because individual rare diseases affect relatively few people.
- **Regulatory constraints:** Complex regulatory procedures and the need for additional clinical studies increase the time and cost involved in introducing orphan drugs in India.

Potential for India's Rare-Disease Pharmaceutical Sector

- **Diverse patient population:** India's large population and higher prevalence of certain genetic disorders due to endogamy provide opportunities for patient identification and clinical trials.
- **Manufacturing capabilities:** India's expertise in generic medicines, biosimilars and advanced therapies, including **CAR-T Cell Therapy**, provides a strong foundation for orphan drug manufacturing.
 - ♦ **Skilled professionals, established infrastructure and relatively low production costs** can support affordable, small-scale production.
- **International collaboration:** Partnerships between foreign pharmaceutical companies, Indian research institutions and patient organisations can accelerate drug development and clinical trials.

Measures to Promote Rare-Disease Drug Development in India

- **Under Rule 101 of the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules 2019**, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has specified six countries — including the **U.S. and the U.K.** — and if one of these countries approves a drug, the drug need not have a new clinical trial conducted in India before its maker seeking the Indian regulator's approval.
- The Department of Pharmaceuticals has launched the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** for Pharmaceuticals, offering financial incentives to selected manufacturers for **domestic production of orphan drugs**.

National Policy for Rare Diseases (NPRD), 2021

- It was launched in **2021**, under which financial assistance up to Rs 50 lakh is provided to patients receiving treatment at an identified Centre of Excellence (CoE).
- In India, rare diseases are categorized into three groups based on the nature and complexity of available treatment options.
 - ♦ **Group 1** includes diseases that can be treated with a one-time curative procedure.
 - ♦ **Group 2** diseases require long-term or lifelong treatment which are relatively less costly and have shown documented benefits, but patients need regular check-ups.
 - ♦ **Group 3** diseases are those for which effective treatments are available, but they are expensive and must often continue lifelong.

Initiatives Taken for Rare Disease Treatment

- **The Unique Methods for Management of Inherited Disorders (UMMID) initiative** is designed to tackle newborn and rare genetic disorders through early screening, affordable molecular diagnostics, and clinical counselling.
 - ♦ It establishes **NIDAN Kendras (National Inherited Disorders Administration Kendras)** to provide prenatal testing, genetic counselling, and multidisciplinary care in government hospitals.

Way Ahead

- India's established pharmaceutical manufacturing capabilities, diverse patient population and growing biotechnology sector provide opportunities to expand into rare-disease drug development.
- A coordinated approach combining research support, streamlined regulation, sustainable financing and assured patient access can help India develop a **globally competitive orphan drug industry** while **addressing the unmet healthcare needs of its population**.

Source: TH

INDIA'S RESERVOIR STORAGE AT 70%: AT 10-YEAR LOW

Context

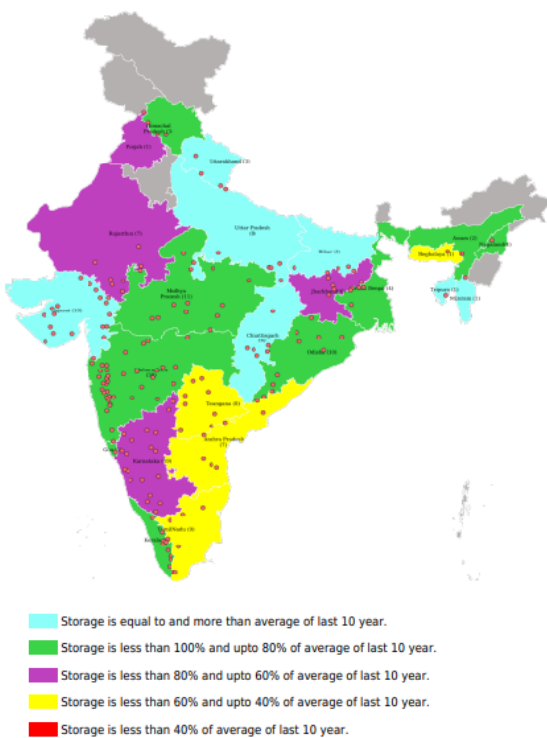
- As **southwest monsoon withdraws** recently, India's reservoir storage remains below the decadal average, raising concerns over irrigation, drinking water and hydropower.

Key Highlights

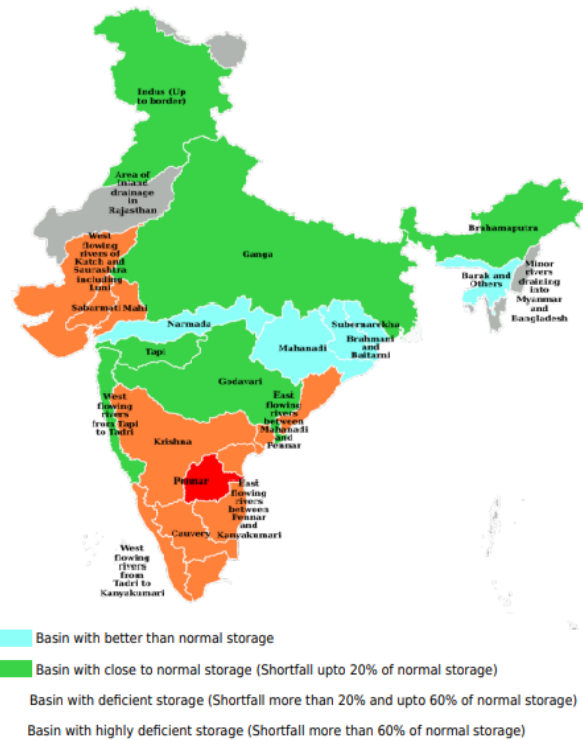
- According to the **Central Water Commission (CWC)** live reservoir storage report dated **September 24, 2026**, water stored in **178 major reservoirs** stands at about **70% of total capacity**.

- It is below the **10-year average of 76.62%** and the **79% storage** recorded during the same period in 2025.
- India's cumulative rainfall was **12% below normal**.
- The monsoon accounts for **more than 70% of India's annual rainfall**, making it crucial for replenishing reservoirs, groundwater and surface-water systems.
- The situation coincides with **drought declarations in parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka**.

Map Indicating State-wise Storage Position



Map Indicating Basin-wise Storage Position



Regional Reservoir Status

- South India (Most Concerning):** The southern region comprising **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu** has recorded the lowest reservoir storage.
 - Current storage: **27.926 BCM (50% of capacity)**
 - Previous year: **87.25%**
 - Rainfall: **23% below normal** as of September 28
 - The sharp decline has implications for irrigation, drinking-water availability and hydropower generation.

- East and Northeast India:** Across **31 reservoirs** in Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Tripura and West Bengal:
 - Storage: **16.157 BCM (73% of capacity)**
 - Seasonal rainfall deficit: around **25%** in much of the region, except Odisha and some parts of West Bengal.
- Northern India:** The **11 reservoirs** in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan show a substantial decline:
 - 2026: **62% (12.431 BCM)**
 - 2025: **92.3%**

- **Western and Central India:**

- ♦ **Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa:** 32.664 BCM or **84.61%**, compared with **95.79% in 2025**.
- ♦ **Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand:** 41.568 BCM or **85.55%**, against **91.89% in 2025**.

Monsoon Deficit and El Niño

- The southwest monsoon contributes **over 70% of India's annual rainfall** and replenishes reservoirs, groundwater and other surface-water bodies.
- However, cumulative rainfall was **12% below normal**.
 - ♦ June recorded a deficit of **35.4%**, August **16.3%**, while July was around **1% above normal** and September 1–28 recorded a **5% deficit**.
- The **strengthening El Niño**, a periodic warming of the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, has been associated with **increased rainfall variability** and **prolonged dry spells**.
- However, ENSO is not the sole determinant of Indian monsoon performance; regional atmospheric and oceanic factors also influence rainfall.

Implications for India

- **Agriculture:** Reduced irrigation availability and greater dependence on groundwater.
- **Drinking water:** Stress on urban and rural water supplies during the dry season.
- **Hydropower:** Lower reservoir levels can constrain electricity generation.
- **Food security:** Water shortages may affect crop yields and agricultural incomes.
- **Inter-state water relations:** Scarcity can intensify disputes over shared river waters.
- **Drought vulnerability:** Poor monsoon performance can translate into hydrological and agricultural drought even when annual rainfall deficits appear moderate.

Way Forward

- India needs to move from **rainfall-dependent crisis management to integrated water-resource management**. Priorities should include:
 - ♦ Basin-level water budgeting and reservoir coordination.

- ♦ Expansion of **rainwater harvesting and aquifer recharge**.
- ♦ Micro-irrigation and water-efficient cropping patterns.
- ♦ Greater use of real-time reservoir and groundwater data.
- ♦ Drought-resilient agriculture and climate-informed crop planning.
- ♦ Rejuvenation of traditional water bodies and wetlands.
- ♦ Strengthening **early-warning and anticipatory drought-management systems**.

Central Water Commission (CWC)

- It is a premier **technical organisation under the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India**.

Key Facts

- **Established:** 1945, initially as the Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission; it was renamed the **Central Water Commission in 1951**.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Chairperson:** Headed by a **Chairman**, who is also an ex-officio Secretary-level officer of the Government of India.
- **Core Mandate:** It provides technical support and advice to the Union Government and State Governments on **water resources development and management**.
- **Major areas of work:**
 - ♦ Assessment of **surface-water resources**
 - ♦ Planning and development of **river basins**
 - ♦ Design and safety of **dams and reservoirs**
 - ♦ **Flood forecasting** and hydrological monitoring
 - ♦ Monitoring of **reservoir storage**
 - ♦ Irrigation and hydropower-related water-resource projects
 - ♦ Studies related to **inter-State river and water-resource issues**
 - ♦ Hydrological data collection and dissemination

Source: IE

PRAHAAR: NATIONAL COUNTER-TERROR POLICY

In News

- The Union Home Minister inaugurated a conference on '**PRAHAAR – CT Policy and Strategy**' in New Delhi.

PRAHAAR

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has unveiled '**PRAHAAR**' as **India's first comprehensive National Counter Terrorism Policy & Strategy** on 23rd February, 2026.
- It frames India's counter-terrorism approach within a **broad threat landscape** that includes cross-border terrorism, global extremist networks (like Al-Qaeda and ISIS), and modern technological risks such as drones, encrypted communication, cyber attacks, crypto-financing, and CBRNED threats.
- It proposes a **seven-pillar strategy** focusing on intelligence-led prevention, rapid coordinated response, capacity building, human rights compliance, de-radicalisation, international cooperation, and societal recovery and resilience.
- It mainly consolidates existing institutions and laws (like NIA, NSG, UAPA, CAPFs) into a single national framework rather than creating new structures.

• SEVEN PILLARS OF PRAHAAR

PREVENTION of terror attacks	rule-of-law-based processes
SWIFT , coordinated responses to extremist violence	COUNTERING radicalisation
ENHANCING internal capacities	ALIGNING and shaping global counter-terrorism efforts
UPHOLDING human rights and	RECOVERY and resilience through a whole-society approach

Importance

- First comprehensive national policy:** Establishes a unified framework for counter-terrorism across agencies.
- Multi-domain protection:** Covers threats via land, air, water, and cyberspace, safeguarding critical sectors like power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space, and atomic energy.
- Zero tolerance principle:** Reinforces India's stance that terrorism cannot be linked to any religion, ethnicity, or nationality.

- Capacity building:** Enhances coordination among intelligence, police, and paramilitary forces.
- Global alignment:** Strengthens India's role in shaping international counter-terrorism cooperation.

Emerging Challenges and Concerns of India's Counter-Terror Architecture

- Cross-border terrorism:** Persistent infiltration and support from state-sponsored groups in neighbouring regions.
- Cyber-enabled threats:** Nation-states and criminal hackers targeting India's digital infrastructure.
 - Dark-web platforms allow anonymous purchase of weapons, explosives and stolen data, complicating intelligence tracking.
- Drone warfare:** Increasing use of drones for smuggling arms and explosives, especially in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir.
- Organised crime-terror nexus:** Terror outfits collaborating with criminal networks for logistics and recruitment.
- Radicalisation:** Online propaganda and sleeper cells of groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS attempting to incite violence.
 - Security agencies warn extremists increasingly use AI-generated propaganda and automated bot networks for radicalisation campaigns.
- Limited specialised counter-terror training capacity:** Many police forces still lack advanced training in cyber intelligence, drone detection and digital surveillance technologies.

Way Ahead

- Strengthen intelligence integration:** Expand real-time data sharing across central and state agencies.
- Cyber defence upgrades:** Invest in AI-driven monitoring systems and indigenous cyber-security solutions.
- Drone countermeasures:** Deploy anti-drone technologies and stricter border surveillance.
- Community resilience:** Promote awareness campaigns against radicalisation, involving civil society and local governance.
- International cooperation:** Deepen collaboration with UN and global partners to combat financing, arms smuggling, and extremist propaganda.

- **Legal reforms:** Update anti-terror laws to address emerging technologies while ensuring judicial oversight.
- **Victim support systems:** Institutionalise rehabilitation and compensation frameworks for victims of terror.

Conclusion

- PRAHAAR is India's first institutionalised anti-terror doctrine, combining prevention, proportionate response, and resilience.
- The effectiveness of PRAHAAR will depend on its implementation at the grassroots level through clear state-wise guidelines, capacity-building of police and ATS units, and strong coordination across agencies for intelligence sharing, policing, and community engagement.
- It also requires monitoring mechanisms to ensure integration of socio-economic and "whole-of-society" measures into security planning.

Source :IE

NEWS IN SHORT

INTERACTION OF TWO WEATHER SYSTEMS

Context

- The exceptionally heavy rainfall in Uttar Pradesh has been attributed to the likely interaction of a deep depression originating in the Bay of Bengal and a Western Disturbance over northwestern India.

Deep Depression over Central India

- A deep depression originating over the Bay of Bengal crossed the **North Andhra Pradesh–South Odisha coast** before moving inland and weakening.
- A depression is an organised **low-pressure system** in which atmospheric pressure is lower than that of the surrounding areas.
 - ♦ **Warm, moist air converges** towards the low-pressure centre and rises. As the air rises, it expands and cools, causing water vapour to condense into clouds and produce rainfall.
 - ♦ The intensity of rainfall depends on factors such as **moisture availability, atmospheric instability, wind convergence** and the system's speed of movement.

Western Disturbance and Westerly Jet Stream

- Western disturbance refer to weather systems that usually **travel into northern India** from the west.
 - ♦ These are **east-moving rain-bearing wind systems** that originate beyond **Afghanistan and Iran** and pick up moisture from the **Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, and the Arabian Sea**.
 - ♦ These are typically **extra-tropical cyclones** resulting from low-pressure areas, formed by interactions between polar and tropical winds.
- **The subtropical westerly jet stream**, a high-altitude, fast-moving air current that flows from west to east in the Earth's atmosphere, **carries these disturbances** to the Himalayan and Tibetan highlands.
 - ♦ As moisture-laden western disturbances hit the Himalayas, they rise and cool, bringing cloudy weather, rain, and thunderstorms, particularly over parts of north and northwest India.

Why Is the Terai Region Vulnerable to Flooding?

- The Terai is a **low-lying, marshy belt** situated south of the **Himalayan foothills** extending across parts of **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other Himalayan foothill regions**.
- Its relatively **flat terrain, high groundwater levels and proximity to Himalayan rivers** make several parts of the region susceptible to waterlogging and flooding.
- Intense rainfall can overwhelm local drainage systems, while high river levels impede the drainage of rainwater from adjoining areas.

Source: IE

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to freedom fighter **Shaheed Bhagat Singh** on his **119th birth anniversary**.

About

- Bhagat Singh was born on **28 September 1907** in **Banga village, Lyallpur district of Punjab** (now in Pakistan).
- He studied at **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic High School** and later at **National College, Lahore**.

- He was a staunch advocate of **socialism**, believing in a society where wealth and resources were shared equally. He was also attracted to anarchist and Marxist ideologies.

Role in the Freedom Struggle

- He joined the **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**, which was later reorganised as the **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**.
- In **1926**, he founded the **Naujawan Bharat Sabha** in Lahore to mobilise young people against colonial rule.
- After **Lala Lajpat Rai** died following a lathi charge during a protest against the **Simon Commission**, Bhagat Singh and his associates decided to avenge his death. They intended to target **James A. Scott**, but mistakenly killed **John P. Saunders**, a British police officer, in **1928**.
- On **8 April 1929**, Bhagat Singh and **Batukeshwar Dutt** threw bombs inside the **Central Legislative Assembly** in Delhi to protest colonial policies, including the **Public Safety Bill and Trade Disputes Bill**. Their objective was not to cause deaths but to "make the deaf hear."
- Bhagat Singh and Dutt were arrested and subsequently sentenced to **life imprisonment** for the Assembly bombing.
- Bhagat Singh later faced charges related to the **Saunders murder**, which formed the basis of the **Lahore Conspiracy Case** and ultimately led to his death sentence.
 - ♦ He was executed along with **Rajguru and Sukhdev on 23 March 1931**, at the age of **23**.

Literary

- His famous essay '**Why I Am an Atheist**' was written in 1930 while he was imprisoned in Lahore.
- He also contributed to the Punjabi magazine **Kirti** and joined its editorial board in **1926**.

Legacy

- **23 March** is observed as **Shaheed Diwas** in memory of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

Source: AIR

PRADHAN MANTRI ANUSUCHIT JAATI ABHYUDAY YOJNA (PM-AJAY)

In News

- The Government has launched 'PM-AJAY' Mobile App and 'PM-AJAY' Portal for expedited and quality implementation of the PM-AJAY Scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY)

- It is a **100% centrally sponsored scheme** launched in FY 2021-22.
- It envisions **achieving socio-economic and educational empowerment** of Scheduled Caste communities through a comprehensive and integrated approach.
- It is a merger scheme of three erstwhile centrally sponsored schemes, namely, Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY).
- It is implemented by the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**.



Source :PIB

SPONTANEOUS CORONARY ARTERY DISSECTION (SCAD)

In News

- Spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD) can trigger a heart attack in seemingly healthy women in their 30s and 40s, often without conventional risk factors

Spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD)

- It is a sudden, often-unrecognized heart attack that occurs when a tear or leak forms in the wall of a coronary artery, causing the vessel to compress and limiting blood flow.
- It has a different mechanism from the traditional heart attack, which is normally caused by a cholesterol plaque rupturing and a clot forming.
- It primarily affects women under 50.
 - ♦ Young women make up approximately 80-90 % of cases and up to one-third of all women with a heart attack.

- Some causes of SCAD are strenuous physical activity, hard lifting, emotional stress, pregnancy and hormonal changes, or underlying vascular problems.
 - ♦ There is a strong association with fibromuscular dysplasia (FMD), a non-atherosclerotic disorder of medium-sized arteries. Other vascular abnormalities (ie, aneurysms and arterial tears) are also more prevalent in people with SCAD.
- In the instance of complete blockage in SCAD treatment may include angioplasty but in the absence of obstruction the artery normally heals without treatment and is treated conservatively unlike a typical heart attack.
 - ♦ Beta-blockers may minimize recurrence. Statins and antiplatelets are used selectively.

Source :IE

GOVERNMENT PUSHES AQUACULTURE INSURANCE WITH 40% PREMIUM INCENTIVE

Context

- The Union Government is promoting aquaculture insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY) by providing an incentive of up to 40% of the insurance premium for one crop cycle.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)

- The Union Government approved **PM-MKSSY in 2024**, with aquaculture insurance included under Component 1-B.
- **Key Features of the Scheme:**
 - ♦ Eligible farmers can receive an **incentive of up to 40%** of the insurance premium.
 - ♦ For pond-based aquaculture, the incentive is capped at **₹25,000 per hectare** of water-spread area, subject to a maximum of **₹1 lakh** for up to four hectares. Farms below one hectare are eligible for the incentive on a pro-rata basis.
 - ♦ **For advanced systems** such as cage culture, Recirculatory Aquaculture Systems, biofloc and raceways, the incentive is 40% of the premium, subject to a maximum of **₹1 lakh** and an eligible unit size of up to **1,800 cubic metres**.

- ♦ SC, ST and women beneficiaries are eligible for an **additional incentive of 10%** of the incentive payable to general-category beneficiaries.
- ♦ Implementation is facilitated through the **National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP)**, with benefits transferred directly through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**.

India's Aquaculture Growth

- Aquaculture accounts for around **74%** of India's total fish production.
- India recorded **19.8 million tonnes** of fish production in **2024–25**, making it the **second-largest** fish-producing country globally.
- Also, **inland fish production** increased to **14.74 million tonnes in 2024–25** reflecting the growing importance of inland aquaculture.
- India has **substantial untapped potential**, with around **1.95 lakh km** of rivers and canals, **31.5 lakh hectares** of reservoirs, **22.1 lakh hectares** of ponds and tanks, and **14.1 lakh hectares** of brackish-water area.
 - ♦ Only around **17%** of the available **brackish-water area** has been developed for aquaculture, indicating considerable scope for expansion.

Source: DD News

GREEN HIGHWAYS

Context

- India's green highways approach is transforming road infrastructure through plantation, climate-resilient design and resource-efficient construction.

What is Green Highways?

- **Green Highways** refer to an approach to highway planning, design and construction that integrates **transportation needs with ecological sustainability**, while considering the environment, public health and surrounding communities.
- Plantation activities are undertaken by Self Help Groups, private agencies, State Forest Departments, Forest Corporations and contractors, according to the scope of sanctioned works.

- As of July 2026, more than **3.61 crore saplings** have been planted across approximately **1.32 lakh km of National Highways** during the last five years.

Green Highways Policy, 2015

- The greening of India's National Highway network is guided by the **Green Highways (Plantation, Transplantation, Beautification and Maintenance) Policy, 2015**. The Policy was formulated to:
 - Evolve a policy framework for plantation along National Highways.
 - Reduce the impact of air pollution and dust, as trees and shrubs are known to be natural sinks for air pollutants.
 - Arrest soil erosion at the embankment slopes.

- Moderate the effect of wind and incoming radiation.
- Create employment opportunities for local people.

Do you know?

- The **National Highways Green Cover Index (NH-GCI) 2025–26** report provides the country's **first** scientific and quantitative assessment of green cover within the Right of Way (RoW) along National Highways.
- Prepared in collaboration with the **National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) of ISRO**, the assessment covers nearly 30,000 km of National Highways under the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) phase across **24 states**.

Source: PIB

