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FISCAL FEDERALISM IN INDIA

Context

- Recent debates over tax devolution and State fiscal autonomy have renewed concerns about the balance between Union resources and state responsibilities.

About Fiscal Federalism

- Fiscal federalism is an **economic framework** for understanding the relationship among Union, state, and local governments, focusing on the division of spending and taxing powers among these governments.
 - It deals with the **division of responsibilities** among different types of governments.
 - It also deals with the division of revenue-raising powers among various governments, often referred to as "tax assignment."
- The traditional theory** of fiscal federalism argues that taxes on highly mobile entities should be assigned to the central government and taxes on less mobile entities to state or local governments.
 - Grants-in-aid and intergovernmental transfers** become necessary when a government's expenditure responsibilities exceed its own revenue-raising capacity.

What is fiscal imbalance?

- The Constitution **distributes taxation powers and expenditure responsibilities** between the **Union and States** through the **Seventh Schedule**.
 - However, the division is not perfectly symmetrical and creates imbalance.
- Vertical Fiscal Imbalance:** It refers to the mismatch between the revenue-raising capacity and expenditure responsibilities of different levels of government.
 - The Finance Commission under Article 280** recommends the distribution of the divisible pool between the Union and the States and the allocation of the States' share among individual States.
- Horizontal Fiscal Imbalance:** It refers to differences in revenue-raising capacity and expenditure needs among governments at the same level, such as between different states or between different local governments.

GST as a Mechanism for Cooperative Fiscal Federalism

- The introduction of the **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** represented a major transformation of India's indirect tax system.

- GST **subsumed several Union and State indirect taxes** into a common framework and **introduced a destination-based taxation system**.
 - The input tax credit mechanism** also reduced the cascading effect of taxation.
- The GST Council under Article 279A** is particularly significant because it provides an institutional mechanism through which the Union and States jointly participate in important GST-related decisions.

Fiscal Responsibility and Public Debt

- The sustainability of **fiscal federalism** also depends on **responsible borrowing**.
- Government borrowing can support development when it finances **productive investments** that generate long-term economic returns.
 - However, **persistent fiscal deficits** can increase **debt-servicing obligations** and reduce the resources available for essential public expenditure.
- The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management framework 2003** seeks to promote fiscal discipline at the Union and State levels.

What are the concerns?

- India's vertical fiscal imbalance** remains a structural challenge because states have extensive expenditure responsibilities but relatively limited access to broad-based and buoyant sources of taxation.
- Horizontal disparities** between States remain significant because States differ substantially in their income levels, tax bases, demographic structures and costs of providing public services.
- The increasing use of tied or conditional transfers** can sometimes reduce the flexibility of states to allocate resources according to their specific priorities.
- The fiscal position of local governments remains weak** because their own-source revenues are limited and their dependence on higher levels of government remains substantial.
- Off-budget borrowings**, government guarantees and other contingent liabilities can make it difficult to assess the true fiscal position of governments.
- Poor expenditure outcomes** reduce the developmental impact of public spending even when governments allocate substantial financial resources.

Way Ahead

- States should strengthen tax administration, improve compliance and expand their revenue base without imposing excessive compliance costs on citizens and businesses.
- Governments should increasingly adopt outcome-based budgeting and evaluate whether public expenditure produces measurable improvements in health, education, infrastructure and livelihoods.
- Future fiscal transfers should increasingly account for differences in climate vulnerability, demographic transition, geographical constraints and the cost of delivering essential public services.

Source: HT

INDIA-SWITZERLAND TIES

Context

- The President of Switzerland is on a 3 day state visit to India.

Major Highlights

- India and Switzerland have signed **five agreements** and agreed to deepen cooperation.
- **MoU on Migration and Mobility Partnership (MMP)**: The MoU aims to develop migration and mobility cooperation under equal treatment principles.
 - ♦ It provides for multiple-entry visas for up to 5 years, including stays of up to 6 months on each visit, and renewable 1-year student permits.
- **Agreement on the Exchange of Young Professionals (YPS)**: It incorporates an exchange of 300 persons annually per country, which may increase to 500, and a timeline of 30/90 days for verification of nationality/residency status, among other provisions.
- **MoU on Promotion and Collaboration on Transportation Technologies, Mobility Systems and Infrastructure** in Identified Areas.
- MoU to promote long-term cooperation between the Indian and Swiss research communities by **supporting exploratory scientific collaboration**.
- Implementation Arrangement (IA) for cooperation in **Innovation, Technology Transfer and Entrepreneurship** between the Department of Science and Technology and the Zurich University of Applied Sciences.

India-Switzerland Bilateral Ties

- **Diplomatic relations** with Switzerland were established with the **signing of the Treaty of Friendship in 1948**.
 - ♦ In 2023, the two countries marked the 75th anniversary of the Friendship Treaty.
- **Institutional Mechanisms**: Secretary-level FOC dialogue was established in 1996, Joint Economic Commission was set up in 1959, Joint Committee on Science & Technology.
- **Trade Relations**: With a total trade of USD 23.27 billion, Switzerland was India's 15th largest trading partner in FY 2024-25. Switzerland is amongst the world's major gold refining centres.
 - ♦ **The landmark Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)** between India and the EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) entered into force on 1 October 2025
 - ♦ Switzerland and the other EFTA States became the **first European partners to conclude a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India**.
- **FDIs from Switzerland to India** from 2000 - 2025 amounted to USD 10.87 billion placing it at 12th position globally.
 - ♦ Swiss FDI in India increased by 53% during 2015-2023.
- **Science and Technology**: The Inter-governmental agreement for S&T cooperation was signed in 2003. Cooperation includes joint research, innovation, advanced technology and academic exchanges.
- **Diaspora**: There are over 29,248 Indians, including about 9662 persons of Indian origin (mostly in Engineering, IT, pharmaceuticals and paramedical, nursing fields) staying in Switzerland.

Significance of Switzerland for India

- **Trade and market access**: The India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) provides India greater access to EFTA markets and aims to expand trade in goods and services.
- **Major investment commitment**: Under TEPA, EFTA has committed to promote USD 100 billion of investment in India over 15 years and facilitate 1 million direct jobs, creating opportunities for India's manufacturing and services sectors.
- **Technology and innovation**: Switzerland has expertise in precision engineering,

pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing, research and innovation. Cooperation can help India access technology, research capabilities and specialised skills.

- **Multilateral and diplomatic importance:** Switzerland's neutrality, strong multilateral engagement and role in international organisations in Geneva make it relevant for India's diplomatic and multilateral interests.

Conclusion

- India–Switzerland relations have evolved from a traditional friendship into a multidimensional economic, technological and strategic partnership, with TEPA providing a major new foundation for deeper economic engagement.

Source: TH

NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE 2026

Context

- The **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (2026)** was awarded for discoveries that enabled **optogenetics**, a technique that uses light to precisely control selected nerve cells.

About Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine

- It is one of the five original Nobel Prizes established by Alfred Nobel, awarded by the **Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet** for discoveries of major importance to **medicine or human physiology**.
- In 2026, the prize carries **12 million Swedish kronor (about ₹11.5 crore)**, shared equally among three laureates.
- **Award in 2026:** The 2026 laureates are:
 - ♦ **Karl Deisseroth** – Stanford University, USA
 - ♦ **Peter Hegemann** – Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany
 - ♦ **Georg Nagel** – University of Würzburg, Germany
- Their work established the **scientific foundations of optogenetics**, enabling researchers to move from merely observing neural activity to **testing the causal role of specific neurons and neural circuits** in behaviour and emotions.

What is Optogenetics?

- Optogenetics combines **genetic engineering and optics** to control the activity of genetically selected cells using light.

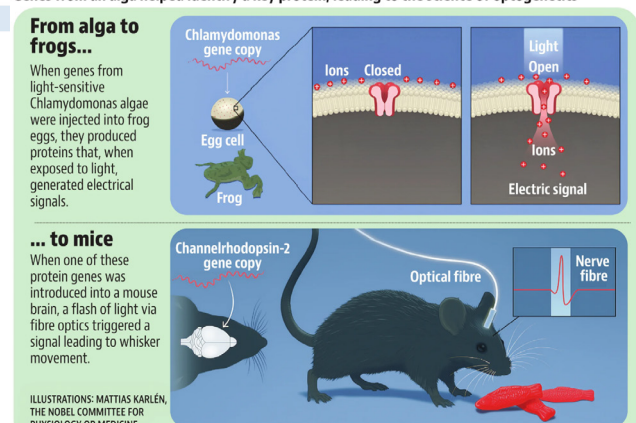
- **Light-sensitive proteins** called **opsins** are introduced into specific neurons.
- These proteins **regulate ion movement** across the cell membrane when illuminated, thereby **turning neuronal activity on or off**.
- It provides much greater temporal and cellular precision than conventional methods such as drugs or electrical stimulation.

Foundations of Optogenetics

- The foundation was laid in the **1990s**, when Peter Hegemann studied the **microscopic alga** *Chlamydomonas* and observed that light rapidly generated an electrical signal.
- Hegemann and Georg Nagel subsequently identified **Channelrhodopsins, light-gated ion channels**.
- **Channelrhodopsin-2 (ChR2)** was particularly important as it could open in about **0.2 milliseconds**, allowing positively charged ions to enter cells and generate an electrical signal.
- Experiments showed that transferring its gene into mammalian cells made them light-sensitive.
- Karl Deisseroth recognised the potential of combining this discovery with genetic targeting of particular neurons.

The protein that unlocked the door

Genes from an alga helped identify a key protein, leading to the science of optogenetics



Applications in Medicine and Neuroscience

- Optogenetics has transformed research on **pain, attention, sleep, memory and social behaviour**.
- It has contributed to understanding disorders such as:
 - ♦ **Schizophrenia and depression**
 - ♦ **Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases**
 - ♦ Epilepsy and other neurological disorders
 - ♦ **Vision and hearing restoration**

- A significant translational development involved introducing a channelrhodopsin-like protein into the **retina of a blind person**.
- Light stimulation enabled sufficient visual function to locate and pick up nearby objects.

Nobel Prize

- **Origin:** Established through the **will of Alfred Nobel**, Swedish inventor, engineer and industrialist, who died in **1896**.
 - ♦ The Nobel Prize seeks to recognise exceptional contributions that have produced **significant benefits for humanity**.
- **First Awards (1901):** Five years after Nobel's death.
- **Original Categories:** Nobel established prizes in **Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, and Peace**.
- **Economic Sciences:** The **Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel** was established in **1968** and first awarded in **1969**. It is not one of the original Nobel Prizes.
- **Awarding Institutions:**
 - ♦ **Physics & Chemistry:** Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
 - ♦ **Physiology or Medicine:** Nobel Assembly at **Karolinska Institutet**
 - ♦ **Literature:** Swedish Academy
 - ♦ **Peace:** Norwegian Nobel Committee
 - ♦ **Economic Sciences:** Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
- **Nobel Peace Prize:** It is awarded in **Oslo, Norway**; the remaining Nobel Prizes are presented in **Stockholm, Sweden**.
- **Prize Components:** Each laureate receives a **medal, diploma and monetary award**.
- **Selection:** Laureates are selected through a process involving **nominations, expert assessment and deliberation by the relevant awarding institutions**.

Source: TH

THREE-DIMENSIONAL (3D) PRINTING TECHNOLOGY

Context

- Andhra Pradesh has initiated a pilot project at the national level for constructing rural houses

using **3D Concrete Printing (3DCP)** under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)** initiative.

About 3D Printing

- 3D printing is a manufacturing process that uses computer-created design to make **three-dimensional objects layer by layer**. It was invented in the **1980s** by **Charles W. Hull**.
- It is an additive process, in which layers of a material like plastic, composites or bio-materials are built up to construct objects that range in shape, size, rigidity and color.
 - ♦ **In 3D concrete printing**, a computer-controlled printer deposits specially formulated concrete or cementitious material layer by layer to create building components or structures.
 - ♦ A robotic printer directly translates a digital Building Information Modelling (BIM) design into a physical structure by extruding specially formulated cementitious materials through a nozzle in successive horizontal layers.

India's Progress in 3D Printing

- In 2021, IIT Madras and start-up Tvasta developed and unveiled India's first 3D-printed house.
- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) released the **National Strategy on Additive Manufacturing in 2022**.
 - ♦ It sought to develop an indigenous ecosystem covering 3D printers, materials, processes, software, products, research and skilled manpower.
- In 2025, the Indian Army has deployed on-site 3D concrete printing technology by the Trishakti Corps in Sikkim and adjoining forward areas.

Applications of 3D Printing

- **Healthcare:** 3D printing enables the production of patient-specific prosthetics, implants, surgical guides and dental devices.
 - ♦ Medical implants can be designed according to an individual's anatomy rather than relying entirely on standardised shapes.
- **Defence:** 3D printing can support the production of customised components, closer to the point of use, potentially reducing dependence on long supply chains.
- **Automotive Sector:** Manufacturers can test multiple designs rapidly without creating expensive conventional moulds for every iteration.

- **Education and Research:** Educational institutions use 3D printers to create working models, prototypes and experimental components.

Pros of 3D Printing

- **Faster prototyping:** Designers may quickly transition from a digital model to a physical prototype, enabling iterative testing and modification without the delays of traditional tooling.
- **Complex designs:** With additive manufacturing, internal channels, lattice structures and other complex geometries can be manufactured, which are difficult to construct using conventional processes.
- **Reduced material wastage:** Material is added only where needed, hence there can be less waste than in many subtractive manufacturing techniques.
- **Decentralised production:** Digital designs can potentially be transferred electronically and manufactured closer to the location where a product is needed.
 - ♦ This is particularly useful for spare parts, remote locations and emergency situations.
- **Reduced dependence on tooling:** Conventional mass production often requires expensive moulds, dies and specialised tools.
 - ♦ 3D printing can reduce such requirements, particularly for prototypes, customised products and low-volume production.

Cons of 3D Printing

- **High initial costs:** Advanced industrial printers, specialised materials and associated software can be expensive.
- **Material limitations:** Not every material can currently be printed with the required strength, durability, precision and reliability.
- **Quality and consistency:** Printed components can be affected by layer adhesion, defects, porosity, thermal stresses and variations in printing conditions.
- **Skilled manpower:** Advanced additive manufacturing requires expertise in materials science, mechanical engineering, CAD, software, robotics and process control.
- **Cybersecurity:** Products are manufactured directly from digital files and any unauthorised modification or duplication of digital designs can also create safety and legal concerns.

- **Regulatory challenges:** Safety-critical applications require rigorous testing, certification, standardisation and quality assurance.

- ♦ This is particularly important for aircraft components, medical implants, automobiles and structural components.

Way Ahead

- 3D printing represents a fundamental **shift from mass production to flexible**, digital and increasingly customisable manufacturing.
- It should be seen not just as an alternative production process but also as an essential foundation of India's move toward **Industry 4.0** and advanced manufacturing.

Source: TH

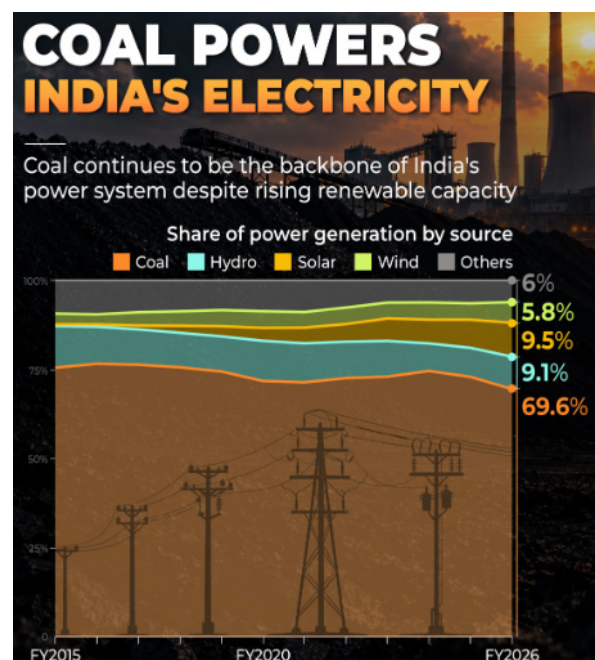
COAL STOCKS CRITICALLY LOW AS POWER DEMAND RISES IN INDIA

Context

- The **depletion of coal inventories** at domestic coal-based power plants this year is the highest in the past three years.

About

- Fuel stocks at domestic coal-based power plants have **declined by around 66% this year**.
 - ♦ The same was 31.8% in 2024 and 36.8% in 2023 for the same period.
 - ♦ Despite the **growth of renewable energy** over the years, coal remains by far the country's biggest source of power generation.



Why is India Dependent on Coal for Electricity Generation?

- **Domestic Coal Reserves:** India has substantial coal reserves, especially in states such as Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. This reduces dependence on imported fuels.
- **Reliable Supply of Energy:** Coal-based power plants can generate electricity continuously, unlike solar and wind, whose output varies.
- **Rising Electricity Demand:** The demand for the electricity has been rising because of industrialisation, urbanisation, electrification and increasing use of appliances and cooling.
- **Renewables are intermittent:** Solar power is available mainly during daylight hours, while wind generation depends on wind conditions.
 - ♦ Until sufficient battery storage, pumped-storage hydropower and flexible grids are available, coal helps maintain supply when renewable generation falls.

Concerns with India's Coal Dependency

- **Environmental Pollution:** Coal-based power plants release pollutants such as particulate matter, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, contributing to air pollution.
- **High Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Coal is a carbon-intensive fuel and contributes significantly to India's CO₂ emissions, making climate-change mitigation more difficult.
- **Water Consumption:** Thermal power plants require significant quantities of water for cooling; this creates pressure on water resources.
- **Environmental Damage:** Coal mining can lead to deforestation, land degradation, displacement of communities and loss of biodiversity.
 - ♦ Coal combustion produces large quantities of fly ash, whose improper disposal can contaminate land and water.
- **Difficulty in Energy Transition:** Heavy dependence on coal can create lock-in of coal-based infrastructure, making the transition towards cleaner energy sources more challenging and costly.

Government Initiatives

- **National Solar Mission (NSM):** It was launched in 2010, it has set ambitious targets for solar

capacity installation, including grid-connected and off-grid solar power projects.

- **National Green Hydrogen Mission:** Promotes green hydrogen produced using renewable energy, with the aim of reducing dependence on fossil fuels in difficult-to-decarbonise sectors.
- **National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF):** It was established to support research and innovation in clean energy technologies and projects that help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **National Wind Energy Mission:** Focuses on the development and expansion of wind energy in India. The target for wind energy capacity is set at 140 GW by 2030.
- **Financial Support & Incentives:** Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for large-scale solar and hybrid projects.
 - ♦ Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for solar PV manufacturing.
 - ♦ Subsidies for rooftop solar and off-grid systems.
 - ♦ Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to promote green power trading.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Green Energy Corridor to improve RE grid integration.
 - ♦ PM-KUSUM Scheme for solarizing agricultural pumps.
 - ♦ Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) to strengthen DISCOMs.
- **International Partnerships:** ISA (International Solar Alliance) was launched by India to promote global solar cooperation, under which India collaborates with countries & global funds for clean energy investment and technology.
- **Grid Integration Plan:** India's grid is being reimaged through the 2.4 lakh crore Transmission Plan for 500 GW, linking renewable-rich states with demand centres.
 - ♦ The Government is prioritizing investment in transmission infrastructure through the **Green Energy Corridors** and new high-capacity transmission lines from Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Ladakh.
 - ♦ While these projects are multi-year efforts, once operational they will **unlock over 200 GW of new renewable capacity.**

- **Vision till 2032:** Government has already planned for building High-Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) corridors and boosting inter-regional transmission capacity from 120 GW today to 143 GW by 2027, and 168 GW by 2032.

Conclusion

- India's dependence on coal is therefore **not simply because India lacks renewable energy**.
 - ♦ It is largely because **coal currently combines availability, established infrastructure, continuous generation and system reliability**.
- At the same time, **India is expanding solar, wind, hydropower, nuclear power and energy storage** to gradually reduce the relative dependence on coal.

Source: IE

NEWS IN SHORT

FIVE NEW CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR STUDIES IN CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

Context

- The Ministry of Education has approved **five Centres of Excellence (CoE)** for the study of **classical languages**.

More About the News

- The approved CoE are for the studies in **Classical Assamese, Classical Bengali, Classical Marathi, Classical Pali and Classical Prakrit**.
- **These will be established at** Tezpur University in Assam, Visva-Bharati University in West Bengal, Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute in Pune, Central University of Odisha, and Central University of Gujarat.
- **The initiative will provide dedicated institutional support** for advanced academic research, preservation and digitisation of linguistic and literary heritage, and wider dissemination of knowledge relating to these Classical Languages.

Classical Languages

- **India had 11 classical languages** — Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia,

Marathi, Assamese, Bengali (Bangla), Pali and Prakrit.

- ♦ Tamil was declared a classical language in **2004**, Sanskrit in **2005**, Kannada in **2008**, Telugu in **2008**, Malayalam in **2013**, and Odia in **2014**.

Classical Languages of India				
Pali 2024	Prakrit 2024	Bengali 2024	Marathi 2024	Assamese 2024
Odia 2014	Malayalam 2013	Kannada 2008	Telugu 2008	Sanskrit 2005
Tamil 2004				

- **Criteria:** The criteria for a language to be classified as a classical language include the following:
 - ♦ **High antiquity of its early texts** or recorded history, spanning a period of **1,500-2,000 years**.
 - ♦ **A body of ancient literature or texts** that is considered heritage by generations of speakers.
 - ♦ **Knowledge texts**, especially prose texts, in addition to poetry, epigraphical and inscriptional evidence.
- ♦ The Classical Language and its literature may be distinct from its current form or show discontinuity with later forms derived from the original.

Source: AIR

FORM 6 CONTROVERSY

Context

- The Chief Justice of India clarified that the **Supreme Court has not approved any modified version of Form 6** used for inclusion of names in **electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)**.

Form 6

- Form 6 is issued by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)**.

What is the Form 6 controversy?

Form 6 is the statutory application prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, for a person seeking inclusion of their name in an electoral roll.

The controversy centres on an additional declaration that was introduced in the online version of the form during the SIR exercise.

The modified online version required applicants to declare whether their own name, or that of a parent or grandparent, appeared in the electoral roll prepared during the previous SIR. The declaration was required to be furnished before an applicant could complete the online registration process.

The change assumed significance because of the large number of first-time voters and existing electors seeking inclusion in rolls being revised through SIR.

A person who recently turned 18, for instance, would ordinarily not have appeared in an electoral roll prepared during an earlier SIR conducted decades ago. It therefore potentially needed such an applicant to establish a link through the name of a parent or grandparent, where applicable.



New Form 6

- In the new Form 6 published in July, **applicants are asked to choose between three statements:**
 - whether their name appeared in the electoral roll during the last SIR held in the early 2000s,
 - whether a parent's or grandparent's name appeared in that roll,
 - whether neither their name nor that of their parents appeared in it.
- Although the new declaration is not marked as mandatory, applicants cannot submit the online form without filling it.
- Moreover, the guidelines warn that making a false statement in it is punishable under Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Source: TH

RUSSIA PLAGUE OUTBREAK

Context

- A suspected outbreak of **pneumonic plague in Siberia**, Russia, has triggered quarantine and precautionary measures after a laboratory worker at an anti-plague research institute died.

About

- Plague is an infectious disease caused by the **bacteria** *Yersinia pestis*, usually found in small mammals and their fleas. It occurs on all continents **except Oceania**.
- It is transmitted between animals through fleas. Humans can contract plague through the bite of infected vector fleas, unprotected contact with infectious bodily fluids or contaminated materials, or inhalation of respiratory particles from a patient with pneumonic plague.
- Types of plague:** There are three main clinical forms:

- Bubonic plague:** Usually follows an infected flea bite and causes **painful, swollen lymph nodes** called buboes.
- Septicemic plague:** Occurs when *Y. pestis* infects the **bloodstream**.
- Pneumonic plague:** Affects the **lungs** and can develop when plague spreads to the lungs from another form, or after inhaling infectious respiratory droplets from an infected person or animal.
- Symptoms:** High fever, chills, severe headache and weakness, followed by **shortness of breath, chest pain and cough**.
- Fatality:** It has a case-fatality ratio of 30% to 100% if left untreated.
- Treatment:** Plague is treatable with antibiotics (such as gentamicin, ciprofloxacin, or doxycycline), making early recognition critical.

Source: IE

DESERT NATIONAL PARK

Context

- The Union Environment Minister and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) released two **great Indian bustards (GIB)** in **Rajasthan's Desert National Park**.

About Desert National Park

- Location:** Desert National Park is located in **Jaisalmer and Barmer districts** of Rajasthan, within the **Thar Desert**.
 - It was established in **1980** under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**, to safeguard the unique and fragile desert ecosystem of the Thar.
- Background:** Declared a protected area in 1980 to combat desertification and conserve the unique Saharo-Thar desert ecosystem.
- Climate:** It is in an extremely hot and arid region, receiving less than **100 mm** of annual rainfall in parts of the park.
- Landscape:** Barchan and longitudinal sand dunes, gravel plains, rocky areas and interdunal depressions.
- Vegetation:** Vegetation is sparse and includes **open grasslands, thorny bushes and desert-adapted plants**.

- ♦ **Khejri (*Prosopis cineraria*)** is an important native tree associated with the Thar ecosystem and is traditionally protected by the **Bishnoi community**.
- ♦ It is also a habitat for **Chinkara, Desert Cat, Desert Hare and Long-eared Hedgehog, Saw-scaled Viper, Persian Gecko and Toad-headed Agama**.
- **Biodiversity:** It is one of the most important habitats for the **Great Indian Bustard (Godawan)**, a **critically endangered** grassland bird.

Source: TH

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